THE LIBERAL STATE

THOMAS WHITTAKER

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THE LIBERAL STATE

AN ESSAY IN POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

BY

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Author of "The Neo-Platonists," "The Metaphysics of Evolution," etc.

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FOREWORD

WHILE English Liberalism remains in the state of collective impotence into which it was deliberately cast at the end of 1918, its thoughtful adherents cannot better occupy themselves than in studying their ideal in all its deeper bearings. That is not done in calculating how a given programme will steer between those of Labour and Conservatism. And it is true that practical politics has its own technique, not to be acquired by mere study of theory. But a technique without guidance from principle is as precarious in politics as in any other praxis. The great Liberal leaders of modern times, from Cobden to Asquith, always considered whither they were tending, and why.

In Mr. Whittaker's short treatise on "The Liberal State" will be found a rare help to clear and thorough thinking on Liberal principles. It may be termed a concise philosophy of politics in the light of the Liberal idea; and, as such a philosophy should be, it is at the same time a concise philosophy of history. Always it maintains the philosophic temper, yet always reasoning to a practical end. In these pages, packed with thought so lucid that every

sentence yields its meaning at the first reading, the Liberal student will find himself piloted from scholarly learning to practice, so reaching a grasp of his principles not to be acquired from the polemic of press and platform.

Mr. Whittaker elects to start, in his quest of the Liberal State, from a view of the polity of Auguste Comte, which in the opinion of J. S. Mill, an early disciple of the Positivist philosophy, would have led to the most complete spiritual tyranny ever achieved among men. To Comte's formula of "Order and Progress" Mr. Whittaker deliberately opposes, without malice, the Liberal ideal of "Justice and Freedom," arguing out all the implications of both. He does not similarly handle the rival polity of Karl Marx, which won in Germany and elsewhere an amount of acceptance that was never gained by Comtism. But in his references to Socialism he gives to the Liberal student a critical lead to discrimination between Liberal and illiberal elements in socialistic theory.

Nor is the guidance blankly theoretic. For a friendly reader, Mr. Whittaker's exposition is vitalised by the variety of his culture. Here Shelley will be found cited, for Liberal wisdom, against the drill-sergeants of the Fabian Society; and Pater against the sectaries who can find no historic good in Protestantism. But the lights of literature are made to shine on a strictly reasoned case.

The "Liberal State," in sum, is conceived as an ever-evolving society for which right prescription is to be found in the collation of ideals with social and economic facts, and in the historic study of state-craft. Comte and Marx both planned before Darwin and Spencer; and their schemes—Comte's for a strictly-regulated State, and Marx's for a future static polity to be set up by military force after an inevitable Social Revolution—belong alike to pre-evolutionary thought. Mr. Whittaker's doctrine is sanely evolutionary.

Such a study, abreast of all the most competent thinking on the general political problem, is in its way unique. It "orients" Liberalism, as a "state of mind," to all the conflicting doctrines which claim to offer something better. Some of its propositions and generalisations may be controverted: no one will dispute its sanity of method and treatment. Those who have most diligently studied the literature of political theory will best appreciate its value as a conspectus and an outlook.

And they will perhaps agree with the present writer in pronouncing it not the least of its author's many services to scholarship and the higher culture to have here shown that "culture," in the large sense, is the comprehensive end of Liberalism.

J. M. ROBERTSON.

March, 1928.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

SOME apology may seem to be needed for the republication, even with revision, of a book on political philosophy dating from 1907. The apology offers no difficulty. The scientific discoveries and inventions and the great events of more than twenty years have done nothing to change essential political, any more than ethical, principles. It is true that they have introduced new complexities for the political State to organise if it can; but that makes re-statement of principles all the more important. It is as Bacon said in the brief "return on himself" with which he brings to a close his magnificent declamation on the uses of natural science for human life. Some may fear that knowledge of nature will be turned to the ends of "malice and luxury"; but let the human race acquire knowledge in abundance: "right reason and sane religion" will govern the use of it.[1] For "sane religion," since the actual religions differ, we may be permitted to substitute

[1] *Novum Organum*, Bk. i, 129: "Postremo, siquis depravationem scientiarum et artium ad malitiam et luxuriam et similia objecerit; id neminem moveat. Illud enim de omnibus mundanis bonis dici protest, ingenio, fortitudine, viribus, forma, divitiis, luce ipsa, et reliquis. Recuperet modo genus humanum jus suum in naturam quod ei ex dotatione divina competit, et detur ei copia: usum vero recta ratio et sana religio gubernabit."

the name of philosophy; in the sense of a "perennial philosophy" common to the great historical schools, and perhaps latent in the ethics of the higher religions. Such philosophy is, of course, pre-eminently moral and civic, not physical or metaphysical; and in dealing with man in society it deals with what ought to be, and not, like anthropology or sociology, merely with what is or has been.

This does not mean that we are to plunge into utopias, but quite the reverse. Present imaginations of the utopian kind are accustomed to set before us some order of things which for each prophet is "bound to come"; the distinction between ends and means, and right and wrong, being treated as metaphysical illusions of the past. How can any age, or all the ages, presume to compete with that which has seen the advent of the military aeroplane, the submarine, and poison-gas? The march of science will inevitably cause the human race to put itself under the direction of certain new Frankensteins who will mould it to a state of efficiency and adaptation such as was never before conceived. Experts in bio-chemistry will, by researches on "endocrine glands," learn how to determine sex and character in accordance with the desires of parents and (ultimately, no doubt) of collective society. The anachronism of nation-States, with their ridiculous "patriotisms" and their literatures for idle and industrially useless people, will be made to disappear.

There will be a universal language, constructed by a consensus of philological experts and business men, and this will be the language of a world-State. Endless new discoveries in means of communication, together with the development of phonetic science, will no doubt make it possible to standardise accent and intonation, so that no interpreter will be needed anywhere, and human intercourse in all parts of the earth will be as smooth as the interchange of the social insects explaining to one another their natural needs. The means of destruction that are at the disposal of the modern world will be directed on undesirable societies by bombs and on undesirable individuals by sterilisation; so that at last, after a series of "next wars" to show forth the glory of Applied Science, which must reveal all its still unexhausted possibilities, even the archetypal societies of ants and bees will have been surpassed by complete elimination of the inefficient and the predatory, and the biologically transitional form of conscious thought will have made way for that perfect model of the most advanced reformers, the automatism of instinct, henceforth established by triumphant mechanism as the true form of the Kingdom of Man.

One man's utopia is another man's nightmare; and some have even found all utopias repellent. At any rate, I do not aim at adding to the number, but place myself on the ground of historical fact. That which I mean by the Liberal State is something

that does not still need to be constructed, but exists. It is also something that ought to exist; and this needs saying, for existence and ethical rightness, though not incompatibles, are not always coincident. Such a State is, however, in need of perpetual modification to meet new conditions; but above all, in the world after the Great War, it is in need of preservation. If it is preserved, its preservation will not be achieved without thought; hence the importance for it of a philosophy.

The remarkable fact has often been noted that a war fought successfully for Liberalism in the widest sense has been followed by the decline everywhere of the political parties classed as liberal. Surprising at first sight, this becomes intelligible when the historical circumstances are considered. For the war was ultimately a war between two systems of government. To understand what these are we must go back to Oriental and classical antiquity.

The Liberal State is in reality the generalised name for a new political system which arose spontaneously in the cities around the Mediterranean from the seventh to the fifth century B.C. In contrast with the great theocratic monarchies of the East, its essence was that the city, or a privileged part of it, ruled itself by the method of deliberate discussion, and was not subjected to the arbitrary will of a ruler or the traditional code of a priesthood. The Battles of Marathon, Salamis, and Platæa

decided that it was to live—that Greece was not to become a province of the Persian Empire. The progress of a world-State was stopped. Europe was never to be parcelled out into Persian satrapies. Here the two types are sharply contrasted. Later the contrast was to become more complicated.

Great historic forms of the Liberal State are the Athenian democracy; the Roman aristocracy (which passed, after its great successes, through democracy to despotism); the English constitutional monarchy, founded, after the Civil Wars between King and Parliament, by the Revolution of 1688; and the parliamentary republic at last firmly established in France after the alternating changes set going by the Revolution of 1789. But this form of government, itself not fixed in type and often divided by fierce internal animosities of aristocrat and democrat, conservative and liberal (in the more special party sense), has always had imposed on it the task of sustaining itself against a reaction, both powerful and subtle, from the older theocratic and absolutist civilisation of the East; which, it must be remembered, had founded the arts of life and had maintained a fairly stable social order for thousands of years before the Greek ideal of freedom arose. This reaction, partly with mitigations and partly with darker elements, may be said to have conquered Europe in the Middle Ages. At the Renaissance the return to classical antiquity brought with it not

only a new enthusiasm for Greek letters and science, but an intensified admiration of the ancient republics; and yet it seemed for a time as if strong monarchy was to be the predominant modern type. This is quite explicable from the immense and beneficent advance due to the subjugation of the mediæval theocracy by the civil power centring in the Kings. By the bringing under of the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the social type of Europe was in fact more profoundly changed between the early fourteenth and the early seventeenth century than it has been by all the technical and industrial developments from the early seventeenth century to the early twentieth. The New Monarchy, however, retained a theocratic element. The Kings claimed to rule by divine right, and priesthood, reduced to the second rank, was a ready agent of tyranny. This was met by revival of classical republicanism, together with appeal to traditional liberties coming down from the old "heroic" monarchies, which were not despotic; and in England and France the cause of the parties that stood for liberty finally triumphed. In Central Europe the liberal cause lost ground, and strong monarchy triumphed for a time. Basing itself on strenuous cultivation of science and of industrial and military efficiency, it appealed at once to the archaic ethics of the right of conquest and to crude ideas of biological "survival." Thus based, the monarchy which identified Will with Law assailed the Liberal

States of the West while they felt themselves sure of the political future. When the Great War had ended in the victory of the Liberal State over its absolutist rival, many must have been tempted to exult as over the final defeat of a secular foe—

> The anarch chiefs, whose force and murderous snares
> Had founded many a sceptre-bearing line,
> And spread the plague of gold and blood abroad:
> And Gregory and John, and men divine,
> Who rose like shadows between man and God;
> Till that eclipse, still hanging over heaven,
> Was worshipped by the world o'er which they strode,
> For the true sun it quenched.[1]

Soon, however, came the notorious "disillusion" of the years after the War. As has been hinted, there is no mystery in this; but it needs explanation.

First of all, it must be conceded that the Liberal State at all times has raised more questions than it has ever solved. In its ancient form it fell because it could not solve the social problem. The hierarchical structures of the East, indeed, involved far more social iniquities, but they were acquiesced in as part of a divine order. The passion for justice and humanity, once aroused in States that acknowledged no master, was fatal to acquiescence in all inherited systems of classes seen to be often in detail unjust and inhumane. Now, modern Europe had its social problem before the War, and it has it still in

[1] Shelley, *The Triumph of Life*.

an intensified form. And this affects the victorious as well as the defeated countries. Indeed, the defeated, having been able to rid themselves of their despots, were in a manner liberated, though against their will. Yet it would be unfair to expect them to rejoice in the collapse of their military ambitions. Thus the victory of the better cause, though it yields to none in history as regards magnitude, has nowhere brought with it the sense of freedom that came to the Greeks when the "stone of Tantalus" suspended over Hellas was removed by the defeat of the Persian hosts, or to England when the overhanging threat of the Catholic Reaction had failed by the defeat of the Armada. For one thing, these were sharp crises soon over, not wars of attrition; and, for another, the Athens of Æschylus and the England of Shakespeare had not yet any deep consciousness of a social problem. The Great War was more like the Peloponnesian War among the Greeks; of which Thucydides has put on record the demoralising effects. As must be seen more and more, it was of the nature of a civil war within what ought to have been a Commonwealth of States. Ultimately the result may be good; for it is now obvious to all who have any vision beyond that of stinging "experts" with an eye for vulnerable ganglia that a new war among great European Powers, with the total absence of moral restriction in the use of

Applied Science that is universally understood to be the legacy of the last war, would finally wreck what remains of European civilisation. "May nations find out by degrees," as Landor said, "that the next evil to being conquered is to conquer." Meanwhile the speculations of militarists on new developments in "the romance of the Air" recall only too forcibly another saying of Landor: "Nothing pleases men like renewing their ancient alliance with the brutes, and breaking off the more recent one with their fellow-creatures." We can only hope, what some hoped in vain before the Great War, that the States of modern Europe have at last acquired a shade more wisdom than the Greek States could put to use on the eve of the tragedy which deprived them of the political leadership of the world.

If, however, the Liberal State is to go on, it must somehow arrive at a solution of problems that are not soluble entirely by its own principles. States that are in a general way entitled to the name may contain within themselves many elements of oppression and injustice. Demosthenes and Cicero and the English orators, legal or political, of the eighteenth century, had to ignore many features in the constitutions on which they composed eloquent panegyrics. There remained always, as Plato said, within actual cities the city of the rich and the city of the poor. And the "class-war," which in the Greek States again and again came to a head in

ferocious factions, remains with us in a more conscious and articulate if less violent form. Some theorists, impressed above all by the social, and especially by the economic, struggle, propose to abolish the mere name of Liberalism, and to order human life by methods totally different from those of the "politicians" of any order. What are we to say of their schemes?

First of all, that nothing else would compensate for the loss of political liberty. It is better to face all chances of injustice than to belong to an order in which the word "justice" would have no meaning; and this is the case where there is no liberty. Now, the case would be realised in a society ordered under doctrinal socialism or communism; that is, a society in which there is no private property and all do their work under the compulsion of governmental authority. Private property, or at least the possibility of acquiring it by labour, is necessary for every person if there is to be liberty or indeed personality. The pocket-money, or *peculium*, allowed in a socialistic State, would be of less value than that of a Roman slave, who by accumulation of the small sums he received could at length buy his freedom. Emancipation would be a term unknown. All would be under "pastors and masters" from the cradle to the grave.

Yet socialism or communism, apart from strict doctrinal usage, may have as good and valuable a

sense as individualism. For members of a society cannot be simply "individuals" and nothing else. They are necessarily social beings living in a community. And in the last resort it may be their duty to place social or communal interests above their interests as individuals. This indeed is an element in moral virtue. But obviously, in a society where there is compulsion through and through to live in accordance with a collective code, all virtue or merit in observing the code disappears. Men have become simply a herd. And where are those to be found who are qualified to be herdsmen?

The antithesis between individualism and socialism or communism in a rational sense can be transcended by going back to a principle insisted on by Aristotle, the founder of Logic, and accepted by Mill, who after him did the greatest single piece of work in the development of logical theory. This principle is in the most complete opposition to the false and fanatical "logic" which adopts a point of view and then proceeds to draw consequences from it regardless of everything else in the world. There were theorists in Greece, as there have been and are in modern Europe, who argued from the fact that such and such a State was an aristocracy or a democracy; that therefore it ought to adopt, in the case of the aristocracy, every institution of an aristocratical character, or, in the case of the democracy, every institution that was held to be democratical. The

true position, Aristotle replied, is just the opposite. Nothing promotes the stability of a State more than a mixture of elements that belong to different constitutions. If the constitution is democratical, it is good that it should be tempered with aristocratical elements; if it is an aristocracy, it is likely to have a longer life when tempered with democracy. Of course, it is understood that a certain organic type is always maintained. To pass over to the opposite type is to lose identity. Except in the case of a revolution, the modification must always be within certain limits.

Passing from pure politics to questions where the social order comes more definitely into view, we may apply that truth by asking whether we cannot temper the Liberal State, not only by a mixture of aristocracy and democracy, but by incorporating in it elements from some hierarchical order related to communism or socialism. And here we find ready to our hands the work of two great thinkers, an ancient and a modern, who had consciously seized the problem, and aimed at superseding the anarchy which in their eyes dominated contemporary life, by a system first reasoned out by philosophy and then brought into force by authoritative regulation. The systems which come under this description are obviously the Republic and the Laws of Plato and the Positive Philosophy and Positive Polity of Auguste Comte.

Not one of these types of polity can be described as itself a Liberal State. Plato's direct starting-point was probably from communistic speculations in his own time, which he profoundly transformed; and Comte early found Liberalism inadequate and aimed at doing, in a very much better way, what the economic socialists were vaguely striving after. In both cases the actual system became stringently authoritative. Worked out at first by the scientific insight of one or a few, the order of society, when established, was to be subject to no general discussion except as regards detailed deductions. In both cases, while the problem was essentially that of western societies, the external model was the apparently immemorial order of Egypt or of Asia. Plato's contemporaries recognised that the castes of the Republic, his golden, silver, and brazen races, were derived from the Egyptian castes of occupation; and the philosopher himself suggests in the Laws that, as regards degree of liberty, a compromise between Athenian democracy and Persian despotism might work best in practice. For Comte the model was the order of the Catholic theocracy realised in the "classic Middle Age" of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries; and this order, though European elements derived from Greek philosophy and Roman law were incorporated in it, was in its restoration of dogma and hierarchy essentially the revenge of Asia for Salamis. With both Comte and

Plato, the dogma at the summit is of course not that of the old hierarchies: by them it is conceived as pure science attained by the deepest insight and having the force of demonstration. Fictions, however, in both cases are found to be permissible for popular use.

This resemblance between the two thinkers is compatible with many contrasts. Plato was a metaphysician, and Comte repudiated metaphysics. Comte also did not particularly like Plato, but had a profound admiration for Aristotle, whom he resembled much less. Perhaps it was a case of "two of a trade," as Plato in the *Laws* humorously admitted that it might be when he expelled the poets from his ideal State. The legislator, he says, is a poet—that is, a creative artist—in his own way, and cannot tolerate a rival artist, who may have in his mind an entirely different order of things as desirable. And this brings out another contrast. Apart from what may be a romance, we have no evidence that Plato ever tried to intervene in practical questions, as Comte did once or twice; and one of his biographers, Olympiodorus, who belonged to the latest group of his professorial successors, says in praise of him that he put aside the solemn airs of the Pythagoreans and their affectation of esoteric teaching, and made himself accessible to all.[1] Comte

[1] A representation which agrees perfectly with the Dialogues, but is totally inconsistent with the Epistles. Much earlier, Celsus, the

of course was accessible to all whom he thought capable of understanding; and no doubt Plato's accessibility was of the same kind; but the contrast as regards sense of humour could not on the whole be more conspicuous.

Perhaps, however, as Renouvier says in his study of Victor Hugo, there is in the case of great men no ridicule for posterity. And disciples of Comte have thought that he no more meant that the Positive Polity should be literally realised than Plato can be supposed to have intended his Republic as a scheme for an actual Greek city. However this may be, both philosophers dismiss from consideration certain types of thinking that recur in every age as plausible to certain minds, though they would rob human life of all its distinctive value.

Socrates, in the *Republic*, sketches, as his first thought of the ideal city, a life of healthy labour for all, varied merely by rest and satisfaction of physical needs; and, though he consents, after the vehement protest of the aristocratical Glaucon against such a "City of Pigs," to introduce instead a "luxurious city" and try what can be done with that as a basis for the good life, there is a trace in him of hesitation

opponent of Christianity, contrasts Plato to his advantage with teachers who claim to have received a revelation from God or a Son of God. Now, Origen, who replied to Celsus, probably knew the Dialogues as thoroughly as his heathen antagonist; but, in parrying the argument, he has no resource but to cite a theosophic formula from an Epistle, thus making the philosopher also a mystagogue.

whether his first thought was not the best, whether culture and refinement are not a deviation from the life according to nature. We cannot help being reminded here of Gonzalo's sketch in *The Tempest*, though that noble Neapolitan (a countryman of Campanella[1]) suggests a still easier kind of life, a life without labour, as in a tropical island, where

> All things in common nature should produce
> Without sweat or endeavour.

With an accentuation of the harsher features of the actual world, we find the same type of thinking in the early Cynics and in modern prophets like Tolstoy. With other differences again—with less of anarchy and more of communism—a similar ideal was set up by the founders of religious orders in the East and in the West. Fascinating as some have found it, it scarcely needs serious refutation, as both Plato and Shakespeare seem to have thought. The modern poet, we may observe, dismisses it with less hesitation than the ancient philosopher. And Comte, too, is entirely committed to the acceptance of a differentiated human life—in short, of civilisation—as against a life in which all live alike, the great differences of innate faculty and of fitness for the different pursuits that develop among mankind being ignored.

[1] To guard against misapprehension, I must remark that Campanella's "City of the Sun," though placed in a tropical island, is far from primitive, being descended from Plato's *Republic*, with aid from More's *Utopia*, and with touches from later science, especially astronomical.

Having dismissed the ideal of a new Golden Age, Plato goes on to lay peculiar stress on the specialising of occupations in his city, though not without some truncation later of their spontaneous growth in complexity. Comte also, along with the same breadth of view, shows in the end the same kind of personal ascetic bias. The compromise hit upon by the great religions is that to live the simpler kind of life is a "counsel of perfection," but that it cannot be enforced on those who have not the vocation. Our own age has seen the rise of a new fanaticism which aims at imposing the ideal of communistic equality by violence on all. How long the communism may last as official doctrine it is impossible to say. All that can be said with certainty is that, if it lasts, modes of accommodation will be found, as they were found by the ascetic religions when they became ruling powers in the world, by which something less than what is supposed to be perfection will be allowed to those who cannot wholly conform to the type.

This is not to say that the imposition of such a type as obligatory does no harm. Definite harm has been done both in ancient and modern times by the setting up, not precisely of a denuded simplicity of life, but of a hard and narrow efficiency, as an end in itself. On the obvious example in antiquity, the Spartan military discipline, Plato, in spite of his known admiration for the Spartan institutions,

has some very searching criticism in the *Laws*; where he blames those institutions for recognising only the military virtues and the acquirements subservient to them. And here comes in a curious illustration of the modernness of the ancients. We find incidentally that the Spartans and the Carthaginians had a sort of Prohibition, no doubt for the sake of military efficiency; and contemporary observers who know the United States tell us that the really effective force behind their Prohibition Law was the belief that the use of alcohol lowers industrial efficiency. Now, Plato's defence of the use of wine, and indeed advocacy of its right use as a kind of training in virtue, could be applied equally against the modern Prohibition. And the remarkable thing here is that a treatise regarded by English Liberals like Grote and Mill, and with some justice, as the reactionary work of Plato's old age, when he was in his most authoritative mood, shows him as more liberal in detail than the practical legislators of the "ultimate democracy" of the New World.

Comte, unlike Plato and Milton, who both as moralists find a place for it if sparingly used, looked forward to the disuse of alcohol under a probable social law of the future; and, in his own system of living, in later life, he suppressed not only wine but all other stimulants, including coffee. Yet the author of the *Positive Polity* would, I have no doubt, have rejected entirely the notion of suppres-

sion by the State. The only prohibition that he could have sanctioned, in such matters, would have been by the counsel and example of his philosophic priesthood, which was to have no coercive power.

But, some reader may object, why discuss a scheme which was always so completely without chance of general acceptance as the political and religious system of Comte? The practical scheme that at present claims to reorganise society is industrial socialism, with an economic base and without the extravagances of revolutionary communism. To this I reply that revolutionary communism is more imaginatively interesting, and that the *Positive Polity* is far more stimulating and suggestive both intellectually and practically. As regards communism, I have already made it clear that I perfectly agree with a saying in Renouvier's republican *Science of Morals*: "Communism, in so far as it is a law of constraint, is incompatible with the moral law"; and I no more desire that the world should submit to Comte's philosophic priesthood of Humanity than I desire that it should submit to any other form of theocracy or atheocracy. Yet I have deliberately chosen Comte's great synthesis for examination not only because it offers itself dialectically as a means of testing Liberalism by confronting it with its opposite, but also because it states in outline, like Plato's *Republic*, problems of the future, and even of the present, which Liberalism by itself has not

known how to solve. There are, I hold, in the system elements of value of which contemporary industrial socialism has not a trace. To this it is superior not merely in degree but in kind. For Comte, like Plato, had in view the whole of society, and not simply that which ought to be conceived as a means, though an indispensable means, to the true ends of human life. Industrial socialism, on the other hand, coincides with the capitalism it opposes in treating the economic aspect of society as the whole, or, at any rate, all that matters.

In particular, Comte's "spiritual power," though unacceptable in the form he gave it, is profoundly suggestive. While his philosophic priests give their counsel from the point of view of an all-comprehensive synthesis of the sciences and of history, they do not, like Plato's higher order of guardians, rule the State. In Comte's own view, they combine the theoretically consultative function of the Catholic priesthood in the Middle Ages with the complete rejection of traditional dogma and the highest attainable training in a philosophically organised science. The repugnance the system at one time aroused in philosophical Liberals sprang naturally from the terrific powers that could be wielded by a priesthood supposed to be separated from the State, as in Western Europe in the Middle Ages. Yet Mill, for whom liberty was supreme, accepted in a very general sense the idea of a separated spiritual power.

And it was really Comte who first distinctly formulated the notion of a class selected for moral and intellectual eminence which was not the State and did not govern the State, but of which the State was to secure the independence. Turning back, we may find such a power in the philosophic schools of antiquity as they actually existed. After some preliminary difficulties they were quite free,[1] and they neither ruled the State nor acted as a department of it. Moreover, in distinction from Comte's priesthood, philosophers, when they gave advice to rulers, gave it individually, not as representatives of corporations. This position of theirs, however, was unformulated; and a new religion, after making their ideas its instruments, had swept away all that remained of the schools as institutions. Ages later the "liberty of philosophising" was revived; and of course, in a complete view, rejecting the limitations of Plato as his own school in fact did, we ought to place the poets and artists beside the philosophers. If we do this, we find, as some of the Positivists have themselves pointed out, the beginnings of a new spiritual power in our own world. But this power is not corporate—and therefore should be more "spiritual."

As an illustration of the view here suggested, an

[1] An excellent account of the way in which philosophical liberty was legally secured to the Athenian schools with the consent of the democracy is given by Professor W. Scott Ferguson in his *Hellenistic Athens*.

allegory might be drawn from that which Comte himself declared to be the greatest dramatic poem in all literature—the *Prometheus Bound* of Æschylus. The poet, I think, may have meant something like it. By this interpretation the ultimate rightfulness of the reconciliation of Prometheus with Zeus can be defended against the protest of Shelley that in the lost play, the *Prometheus Unbound*, according to the reports of it that we have, the champion of mankind was represented as "unsaying his high language and quailing before his successful and perfidious adversary." The protest would have been justified if a possible solution had been, as in Shelley's own drama, an apocalypse in which human nature and the physical conditions of the universe are transformed. It cannot be said dogmatically, in view of the new physics and the stages of evolution that we actually know, each unpredictable from those that preceded it, that such a transformation is inconceivable; but the Greeks in their prime were not apocalyptists. Doubtless the speculative thought of Æschylus was based on the Ionian physics, for which there is no history of the universe as a whole, but only of alternating changes within it. Now, Prometheus in the drama is figured as knowing the constitution of things and foreknowing events. As the representative of wisdom and love of humanity he has never aimed, and does not aim for the future, at power for himself. He knows that the order of

the world does not permit the direct rule of love and wisdom in practice. In the conflict of celestial ambitions he first offers his aid to the Titans against Zeus, but they reject it because they hope to prevail by violence and therefore disdain subtlety. Zeus, the high God whose aim is dominion, succeeds through the intellect of Prometheus; but, once in possession of power, he begins to act as a tyrant, and plans to annihilate the human race. Prometheus, to counteract the scheme of the new King of Heaven, brings to the cave-dwelling savage that man at first was, the gift of fire, and with it the rudiments of the arts by which he can become a civilised being. For this crime against the majesty of the supreme lord, and the privileges reserved for the immortals, he is crucified on Mount Caucasus by Hephaestus under the direction of Kratos, the son of Styx and the servant of Zeus. Hephaestus we may take as representing the technical skill which intellect has made its instrument in the evolution of human from animal life. He is suspected of having taken part with Prometheus, and he serves the tyrant unwillingly; while Kratos, whose name may be translated as Strength or Power or Might, exultingly proclaims that the ruler of the gods alone is free. The rebel among the immortals is to be taught "to love the tyranny of Zeus and to cease from his philanthropic mind." Meanwhile Prometheus knows of a prophecy that Zeus shall be dethroned by a stronger

power. The only way of escape from this doom is that he shall release Prometheus from his fetters and seek reconciliation with him. The wielders of the doom are the eternal laws behind the gods—the Fates and the Erinyes, the handmaids of Justice, as Heraclitus called them—who, if the sun oversteps his measures, will find him out. Yet, while Prometheus triumphs in imagination over the prospective fall of Zeus, there is no suggestion that the power which ends his oppression of heaven and earth will be better. All that is certain is that the irresistible new portent will wield terrors fiercer than the lightning and louder than the thunder. The unforgetting Erinyes, indeed, will have punished Zeus for his injustice; but the new order, for all that can be foreseen, may be worse than the old. Hence Prometheus, convinced that practical will must always rule, though too great want of wisdom and justice will bring it to naught, reconciles himself to that which he understands and can make terms with; while Zeus, on his side, aware of destiny, becomes a moral governor of the universe. The final result is that the condition of the preservation of power is to take account of disinterested wisdom; though this, in the actual world, can never set in motion the forces by which life is visibly impelled.

CONTENTS

		PAGE
FOREWORD, BY THE RT. HON. J. M. ROBERTSON		iii
PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION		vii
CHAP.		
I.	INTRODUCTORY	1
II.	THE WATCHWORD OF THE STATE	12
III.	FROM THE ANCIENT TO THE MODERN REPUBLIC	28
IV.	POLITICAL CONSTITUTION	65
V.	SOCIAL ORDER	74
VI.	THE STATE AND RELIGION	108
VII.	EDUCATION	118
APPENDIX:—		
	I. INDIVIDUALISM AND STATE-ACTION	133
	II. POLITICS AND INDUSTRY	143
INDEX		157

μήτ' ἀνάρχετον βίον
μήτε δεσποτούμενον
αἰνέσῃς.

—Aesch., *Eum.*, 525–7.

"Neither anarchy nor despotism."

Ἐλέξαμεν ὡς τὸν νομοθέτην δεῖ τριῶν στοχαζόμενον νομοθετεῖν, ὅπως ἡ νομοθετουμένη πόλις ἐλευθέρα τε ἔσται καὶ φίλη ἑαυτῇ καὶ νοῦν ἕξει.

—Plato, *Leges*, iii, 701D.

"Liberty, fraternity, and thought."

Chapter I

INTRODUCTORY

Of the three greatest synthetic intellects of the nineteenth century, the most antipathetic to political liberalism, in apparent tendency, is Comte. Yet, curiously, while Hegel and, to some extent, Spencer have been used in the interests of reaction, Comte, in spite of the intensely retrograde tone of his later work, has never been of the slightest service to any of those who have practically defended the remains of that old authoritative order which he so profoundly admired. Whatever may be the reason of this, it is worth while to take a hint from the fact. I propose to select, as the starting-point for a political construction in which the idea of liberty is supreme, the final crystallisation of human society imagined in the *Positive Polity*.

First, we may recognise a real advance in insight in Comte's later work as contrasted with the *Positive Philosophy*. He had come to see clearly that, from his own point of view, there is a kind of cycle in human history. The ideal order at the end more resembles in many ways a long-past order than it resembles the characteristic intermediate phases. This old order he finds not in Europe, but in what he regards as the typical theocracy of the ancient East. Under this type of a "complete," "normal," "organic" system he tries, by a too wide generalisation, to bring India and China, as well as Egypt and Western Asia. India and China (with Japan, which he also includes) in reality represent outlying forms, modified in the first case by a highly specula-

tive tendency of the priestly caste, which detached it from the effective government of life; in the second case by a strongly practical bias of the general mind, which gave the direction to an essentially secular, if nominally spiritual, authority. Still, it remains true that the portion of the East with which ancient Europe was in contact had very much the character ascribed by Comte to his ideally stable theocracy. Its form of social order was that which has been assumed by the earliest elaborate human civilisations known; and it had lasted for a period to be numbered by thousands of years. Thence, as Comte held, our own civilisation has in part actually descended; though, as he noted also, we had to "change ancestors" at a certain point. And, he went on to insist, human life, in our part of the world, has never regained equal stability. All since then is "revolutionary transition."

The point at which he places the beginning of this revolutionary transition is the Homeric period in Greece. Thus the transition in Europe to a new order (not yet existent) has already occupied three thousand years. Its beginning is marked by the rise to power of the military class before there is a fixed organisation of life under the representatives of authoritative religion. Under Eastern theocracy, indeed, military chiefs acquired the kingship of the great social aggregates; but the system was then too fixed for the warrior-king, apparently autocratic as he might be, to modify it by his personal initiative. The vicegerent of deity cannot change the divine order to which he belongs. The old "heroic monarchy," the type of which may be seen in Greece and later in Northern Europe, is thus the first form of the revolutionary transition; preceding aristocracy and democracy, which are the succeeding phases. The king is here the head of a body of armed freemen, and has a limited but real directing power not stringently determined by ancient custom.

The consciousness of the community, working, in the absence of a strong sacerdotal caste, with a certain detachment from presuppositions, can act through him as its organ. As against this distinctively military kingship, the structure of the typical theocracy is profoundly industrial. The military class, even when employed for conquest, is subservient. The king, with his sacred attributes, even when he becomes a conqueror, is merely the director of a total system elaborated by a pacific priesthood. The principle of the system is caste—that is, essentially, hierarchical division of labour. According to Comte, this is fundamentally the more rational order. The priesthood represents the inherited wisdom of the community, dominated by a theological philosophy which is then the highest attainable. It restricts as much as it can the destructive activity of warfare. Every social function has its place in an ordered system that needs peace to flourish. The defect is that the system is insufficiently progressive. Functions tend to be hereditary: distribution of them in accordance with personal merit is not a distinctive social aim. The religion, in contrast with that of Greece and Rome, may be called "conservative," as opposed to "progressive," polytheism. Or, as we may say by way of commentary, religion, in relation to the rest of life, was a stronger bond in the first case than it was in the second. What the military civilisation of classical antiquity accomplished was to break down the old order and prepare for the new. It could not found anything definitive. In Greece the relatively unorganised character of the religion permitted some freedom of thought, through which the first steps were taken to the final positive (atheological) philosophy. The result of this, however, for the Greeks themselves was irremediable anarchy. Rome (to which Comte is more sympathetic), by organising the system of military

conquest, in which the Greeks had failed, promoted the formation of public, as distinguished from private or merely family, spirit. For industrial activity, though it is constructive, is unfortunately egoistic in its determining motives. Altruism is developed through the sense of community; and this, at first, can come only from the joint action necessary in war. Since, however, warfare is destructive in the means it takes to its end, there is here, again, a merely provisional value in the result. First, offensive must pass into defensive war, and then war between communities must cease, before the definitive state can be attained. It will have been attained when the positive philosophy, substituting Humanity, as the true Great Being or highest manifestation of life on the planet, for the extra-mundane God, has been systematised in the religious form of a cult and a dogma; and when public spirit has been turned from the destructive methods of militarism to the service of man through socialised industrialism. Instead of Theocracy there will at last reign the even more organic and stable "Sociocracy."

According to this scheme, the European Middle Age is one phase of the revolutionary transition. And Comte still held so far to the scheme of the *Positive Philosophy* that he tried to represent this phase as continuously progressive on the lines of the whole intermediate period from Homer to himself. The Roman Empire was the terminus of a system of conquest. Christendom was a defensive system; even the Crusades, in spite of their aggressive appearance, being only the means of preserving Western Europe from reduction under the rival order of Islam. In Catholic monotheism theology had reached the last stage before its dissipation by the destructive agency of metaphysics, to be followed by the positivist construction. Yet it was not the theology of

the Middle Ages that he admired, but their social order. And in his later work he has an occasional perception that this—whatever may be the case with the other features of the period—was a return to the type of an Asiatic theocracy. Thus he ought logically to have regarded it as a check to the revolutionary transition. On his part this would have meant no reproach; for, when he comes to the "anarchy" of modern Europe, which set in with the break-up of mediæval institutions from the fourteenth century onward, he can find no praise too strong for the "admirable retrograde school" (of De Maistre and others) which, as he thinks, discovered the speculative justification of the old order in its time. The "right of private judgment" was, in his view, of merely temporary value. The permanent truth in principle, as against the Protestants and Deists of the transition, was with the Catholic reaction. Only the particular dogmas of the reaction were at fault. The value of the transitional anarchy consisted in this: that, presuppositions being dismissed, the great thinkers of the modern world could prepare the way for the replacement of Theology by Positivism. The sciences of experiment and observation are henceforth to furnish the universal type of knowledge; and it is to be recognised that there is no providence above the human providence. This dogma having been substituted for the Catholic dogma, and the providential order dictated by the Religion of Humanity established, there is no place for any liberty of thought except the "relative" liberty of deducing conclusions from accepted premises. To this final order the mediæval Church has a peculiar teleological relation. It was a kind of theocratic new model, which had to be broken up because of the defects of its doctrine, but which, by its strict separation of the spiritual from the secular power, indicated the true line of advance from the

ancient theocracies with their confusion of the two. Here both Islam and Byzantine Christianity failed to make the advance, the failure of the latter being the most decided. Positivism dismisses the doctrine of Western Catholicism, with all other theological doctrines, but preserves or restores its social and spiritual organisation.

In the definitive order the Positivist priesthood, consisting of men of science or philosophers selected for a combination of moral and intellectual aptitudes, will have only a consultative voice in affairs; but, with no more than this, it will be in effect more powerful than the Chaldæan or Egyptian priesthood or the mediæval Papacy. From secular life the anarchical system of appointing to public offices by a vote of the people (as in Greece and Rome), or of choosing by vote representatives to determine ministerial appointments (as in modern times), will meanwhile have ceased. Activity being industrial, except in so far as some military organisation is necessary for internal police, the proper secular rulers are the industrial chiefs. From these, in each State, three will be appointed as dictators. Their appointment, when the system is in working order, will be by their predecessors. They will govern benevolently in the interests of the working classes and by the advice of the priesthood. The effective supremacy of the priesthood would be secured in Comte's system by great reductions in the size of existing States. No one of these, as against a cosmopolitan church under a single head—the High Priest of Humanity—is to have any real choice of an independent destiny. The priesthood also is to be appointed by nomination on the part of predecessors and superiors. "Election by inferiors" is a typical absurdity of the anarchical transition. Its only value, as with the "right of private judgment," was in its relation to future progress. Progress, unfortunately, could not go on

beyond a certain stage while authority remained in the hands of the ancient hierarchy. Yet nothing in history is more excusable than the attempt of this to cling to power after its time had passed. And, of all the institutions that have thus tried to maintain themselves beyond their own historical period, none deserves more respect and sympathy than "the admirable Catholic-feudal type."

Here we discover the root of Comte's aspirations. His whole later development has the value of showing to what positions the mediæval reaction which was so conspicuous an element in the complex nineteenth century logically leads. That reaction is not yet exhausted, but has been reinforced by the new concentration of wealth seeking to organise itself on a feudal model. This concentration Comte proposed not to check, but rather to encourage artificially. An "industrial patriciate" is to take the place of the feudal nobility, as a scientific priesthood is to take the place of the theological priesthood. Women are made the objects of a cult, in which they are regarded as the "moral providence" of humanity, but they have no rights of property. According to the social code to be accepted, they are in strict economic dependence. So also, on the whole, are working men. The proletariate is to be normally passive, constituting the "general providence," as contrasted with the "intellectual providence" of the priesthood and the "practical providence" of the patriciate. Personal merit, Comte observes historically, is of more value under militarism than under industrialism. High industrial functions are quite compatible with mediocrity. Thus, while the Athenian demos aimed at recognition of personal merit, and the Roman aristocracy to a greater extent succeeded in making its emergence possible, it can hardly be expected in the ideal polity to determine largely the functions of the individual in life. It will indeed be the

principle socially recognised for distribution of functions; but, the "revolutionary transition" once over, there will be a considerable return in practice to fixation of occupations by heredity. Where personal merit will tell is in the distribution of posthumous honours at the hands of the priesthood. "Objective immortality"—that is, the continuance of a separated soul—is a chimera; but by the true servants of humanity "subjective immortality" is attainable in the memories of survivors. This will be the compensation for thwarted ambitions and uncongenial careers. For the rest, these do not very much matter: social functions can, on the whole, be pretty well fulfilled by those who are trained for them, without much reference to innate differences, of which it is easy to exaggerate the importance. What is most important of all is to cultivate the moral virtue of humility. To this the priesthood will attach the greatest value. The social system will be one of "duties, not rights," of graduated command and obedience. For the secular chiefs, who have the responsibilities of large mercantile and industrial undertakings, a certain satisfaction will be offered (within bounds) of pride and the taste for luxury. The pride of the practical class is less socially dangerous than the vanity of the theoretical class; though, Comte rather strangely adds, vanity is a nobler quality than pride.[1] Any extreme aberrations of the practical chiefs will be redressed by measures of the priesthood. If the capitalists systematically fail in their duties, then the working class will be called on to carry out something of

[1] Comte's proposition is true in the sense he gave to it—that the desire to influence by persuasion is nobler than the desire to rule by material power; but these are not the usual meanings assigned to pride and vanity. By "pride" is generally understood a high opinion of oneself not dependent on the imagination of what others think; by "vanity" an imagination of the high opinion of others. Comte himself, in this sense, was proud, not vain.

the nature of a papal interdict. This will be a more powerful weapon than an interdict was in the Middle Ages. It must be added that, in the ideal order, all classes and both sexes are to be educated on similar lines up to the age of twenty-one. Whether this is a mitigation or an aggravation of the system of hierarchical dominance would be an interesting topic for debate. Plainly enough, the whole social system is ultra-Catholic. The moral sentiment to be cultivated is that of the "slave-ethics" found by its enemies in the Church Catechism.

There is no need, however, to cry out against this scheme. The representatives of the past, to whom Comte appealed, knew that here was no salvation for their cause. He waited in vain for a response from Nicholas I of Russia or from the Society of Jesus. Hierarchs and despots perceive instinctively that the order they stand for cannot be maintained or restored consistently with a transformation of theology into its negation *plus* science. The phantasms in whose names they rule have a kingdom which is "not of this world." Priesthoods, in order to move the visible world, must have the fulcrum of their lever, as Hume said, in the invisible. Now Comte's distinction of "spiritual" and "secular" is no longer an "absolute" opposition between two worlds, but is correlated, as he would say, with the "relative" opposition between theory and practice. His priesthood, therefore, can appeal only to demonstration and verification, not to traditions from gods, or to revelations, or to occult knowledge of invisible beings with wills modifiable by duly performed rites. Humanity and Reason, in whose name it must assume to rule, are always there to judge it. It can threaten with no thunders from a supernatural judge. The whole basis of its authoritative headship is from the first non-existent.

By the admission of some disciples of his own, Comte's theoretical doctrine has no rational connexion with his social hierarchy. This seemed to them the resultant, not of positive science nor of the repudiation of metaphysics, but of systematised reaction against practical tendencies he disliked. Yet we must not regard the whole conception of a definitive social order as chimerical because one particular expression of it is baseless. The view put forward in the *Positive Philosophy*, that an ideal order may be conceived to which progress, after a time, will become "asymptotic," is reasonable enough. A type approximately maintained for thousands of years, and more and more slowly getting nearer to its perfection, might very well be the outcome of a relatively short transition. And on the geological scale the three thousand years of Comte's transitional period—soon, in his view, to be ended—make only a short stretch of time. Indeed, this is exceeded on the scale of recorded history by the millennia that can now be assigned to the civilisations of Babylonia and Egypt. If we add to the years of the old theocracies those of the Cæsarean and Papal and modern absolutist *régimes*, not much is left for what Comte chooses to call anarchy. But are the Greek republican period and the period of more or less popular constitutions since the close of the Middle Age distinctively mere anarchies? Shall we not rather say that they are the adumbration of a new and distinctive order? The polemic of the reaction, it must be allowed, has forced liberal thinkers to put the alternative in this modest form. We are no longer confident in the possession of an accepted system to which all else is unenlightenment and barbarism. And, if we reject Comte's side of the alternative, we have evidently before us a more difficult problem than he set himself. For both the Greek and the modern periods of relative freedom are too short and too mixed in

character to permit of our finding, on any extensive scale, an already existent model for the future. Moreover, the new type may be, even in the ideal, less determinate than Comte thought. We may hope that at any point of the future considerable variation will still be possible, and may therefore feel it necessary to guard against too great fixity in our ideals. By this kind of caution he was in no way troubled. On the other hand, we must beware of looking on continuous change itself as the ideal. From any point of view, there has been something cyclical in the historical process. This has consisted in movement between two contrasting and relatively fixed types. If Comte was right, the Middle Ages were a premature attempt to restore an ideal order that had been lost. If he was wrong, they were a reaction towards a superseded order. In either case, modern times mark a recurrence in some ways to the order or anarchy, whichever we choose to call it, of the Greek period.

Chapter II

THE WATCHWORD OF THE STATE

Positivists may ask, What better device or watchword can you find than that of the Church of Humanity—"Order and Progress"? There is no difficulty in accepting the challenge. The Liberal State, claiming to be the true organ of Humanity, could fairly reply that a better watchword is—"Justice and Freedom." This has in truth been the ideal both of ancient and modern States of liberal type; though, of course, it has been very imperfectly realised even in the best of them. The poetic and philosophic thinkers of Greece would have been in perfect accord with the popular mind in accepting the phrase as the utterance of an aspiration in which all should agree. Though differing about details, none would have disputed the general formulation. Admitting of debate in practice, it is yet much less ambiguous than the other. For an actual "order" may be detestable; and "progress" may be interpreted to mean no more than increased mechanical efficiency in attaining ends of little or no human worth. The Persians, in bridging the Hellespont, cutting a canal through Athos, and doing all they could to subjugate the Greek "anarchy," might easily regard themselves as the practical interpreters of both terms. A Greek despot, adopting the usual policy of supporting religion and promoting works of material utility, would have accepted the motto with delight. It may be said with truth that Comte's own ideals are different, and are not in the ethical sense materialistic; but that only shows the ambiguity of the phrase. On the other hand, the concep-

tion of justice as a distinctive virtue with a political reference, and especially related to freedom, was new in the world. It did not belong to the theocratic East, where the virtues were conceived in terms of obedience to a supreme will which dictated the law. This will, no doubt, was said to be "just"; but that was only a general term of praise. The "just man" was a synonym for the "good man," who observed the rules of the social code. This usage, indeed, has continued to a considerable extent in ancient and modern European literature; but, from the beginning of Greek political life, there has also been the more distinctive meaning of justice. From Greece it passed on to Rome and to modern Europe. Are we to conclude, because an ideally just order has not yet been attained, that the appeal to justice has no positive value? Shall we regard it as merely a disintegrating agent that destroys the reverence for ancient might and substitutes nothing but an imaginary equality of rights unattainable in the world of reality?

This last position Comte would not to its full extent have maintained. In spite of the contempt which he expresses for theories of "rights," he did not expel justice formally from the list of virtues. Freedom has a place in his scheme, though a minor one. He would reserve a sphere for individual independence as against the extreme forms of communism. He recognises as the most advanced polity the "Republic of the West," which consists only of the group of States that have gone through the "revolutionary transition." And he has the insight to admire to the full the highest expression of the ideal opposed to his own. While, in his later work, outgoing Joseph de Maistre in his antipathy to the Greeks, to whom he will not allow even artistic pre-eminence, he can yet enthusiastically praise the supreme genius of Æschylus. In the *Prometheus Bound* he sees the protest of the European

consciousness against the jealous theocracy of the elder world. None the less, his conviction remained that the value of this, as of all protests, was only temporary. Knowledge is not, indeed, to be kept for ever within a closed circle; but temporary liberty is, after all, only a means to giving authority a firmer and a wider base. Thus the intensest expression of authority pure and simple is with him the last word. Benevolent superiors are to determine what is good and useful, and a subject community is to live according to their dictates. It is admitted, no doubt, that superiors may err, but they are not to be bound by law. The methods of redress are such as have been in use with oppressed masses in Asia and in mediæval Europe, resorting, in the absence of regular means of remonstrance, to "direct action." His ideal was in effect still the graded hierarchy descending from the supra-mundane God through the ranks of his servants on earth. In his polity, reciprocal and equal obligation is not only not the determining social principle, but is explicitly rejected. To find this worked out we must go to thinkers of a different type.

Attempts have been made to work it out with clear abstract perfection. These began in the Greek philosophic schools, had a profound influence on Roman law, and, in conflict and interaction with other theories, have found varying expression in mediæval and modern speculation. The form of such a theory seems to be a true expression of the European moral consciousness. It may not carry its own evidence in itself, but it appeals to a kind of prevision that something like it will be found to result from the analysis of moral ideas. And, indeed, this has usually been found to be so. The most analytical moralists have marked out a place for a system of rights which, whether called "natural" or not, are such as ought to be observed between members of human

society. In their analysis, however, those who have taken what is called the experiential view have not left the matter there. The ideas of right and duty and obligation, they have found, are ultimately referable to an end of action. This, and not pure "law" or "form," is the supreme principle alike in politics and in ethics. Can we deduce justice from this?

By the thinkers known as Utilitarians, the end has been defined either as "happiness" or as something that is necessarily accompanied by happiness. Attempts have been made to give extreme precision to this view. Bentham, for example, thought that happiness must be defined as the algebraical sum of pleasures and pains, pleasures being treated as positive and pains as negative quantities. The social end, as it must be conceived by the legislator, is the maximum of happiness in this sense. But Bentham's principle, though it served its purpose in the theory of legislation, where subtleties in defining the end are unnecessary, has no final theoretical validity. It merely substitutes, for the natural right of the individual to equality of treatment, a natural right of each particular element of pleasure to count simply in proportion to its quantity as contributing to a total. In fact, it is "abstract" in the worst sense. Happiness is not a sum of pleasures, though pleasures may be an element in it. Really it is a state of the personality, to which no calculus is applicable. What the attempted calculus of pleasures and pains did was to set up a general criterion by which much absurdity and inhumanity could be banished from legislation. For, of course, there are some generally ascertainable conditions of human happiness; and these, so far as the legislature can formulate them, are appreciable by treating happiness on purely hedonical principles. The valuable thing in Bentham's formula was (as has been said by a thinker of another

school) that the "greatest possible happiness" was that of the "greatest possible number"; that every one was to count for one, and no one for more than one. It was, in fact, a rough principle of "democratic justice." And yet, when the same principle was expressed in terms of the "natural rights" of persons, and not of elementary pleasures and pains in abstraction, Bentham called it an "anarchical fallacy."

On the whole, it seems to me that, if we are utilitarians, it must be in the very broad sense in which the term (admittedly an unfortunate one) is applicable to Plato and Aristotle. The end being happiness, anything that brings the happiness we desire may be said, by stretching the ordinary meaning of utility, to be "useful" in relation to it. But perhaps utility is best kept to its ordinary sense, in which it refers to a means not desired for its own sake, but only in relation to an end. For the relation between happiness and the activities it accompanies is quite different. There is here no externality. We say that in a certain activity of the personality there is happiness; but the happiness and the activity are not separable. The subjective feeling cannot exist except as part of a total state. And the elements of this total state are not definable through and through in hedonic terms. The moral virtues related to the end have therefore to be arrived at by various devices not reducible to a calculus. Such, for example, was Aristotle's method of placing them in a mean between opposite excesses and defects. For a theory of happiness in advance of that implied in the hedonical calculus we might adopt Plato's later method of "mixing" knowledge or insight with pleasure and other elements.

Now, some maintain that the virtue of justice cannot be arrived at by any reference to happiness. They do not deny that happiness is an end, or that it may result

from the practice of justice; but, they say, justice in itself is an affair of correlative right and duty, a law and an obligation, not properly related to an end, but essentially an *a priori* "form" of all moral action. Utilitarianism, through ignoring this, leads necessarily to some kind of benevolent despotism, where there is no question of justice in the proper sense. In the ideal utilitarian order those that have insight into the means to happiness must seek to rule irresponsibly; and the others must be willing to obey. The autonomy of personal wills cannot be recognised as against the general interest. In short, a polity like that of Comte is the logical outcome of the reference of morality to ends. Naturalism (of which this reference is a part) and theocracy, therefore, ultimately coincide in the social type to which they lead.

Let us return, then, to Comte's formula in its more detailed expression, and see whether, after all, on utilitarian principles, we may not have to give up what was proposed as the better formula. In full it runs thus: "Love, the principle; order, the basis; progress, the end." Will this bear the substitution of "justice, the basis; freedom, the end"? Or does it follow, if we admit love, or, in Comte's other phrase, "altruism," as a first principle, that we must accept the rule of benevolent despots? I do not see that the inference is logically necessitated. It rather seems to me that the words substituted might stand as a more exact interpretation of that which in Comte's meaning has permanent validity. Thus interpreted, it ceases to be ambiguous. Order is good if it is a just order. Progress is worth while if it consists in, or is finally compatible with, increased freedom. And freedom and justice imply the recognition of personal autonomy.

I have assumed that, utilitarianism being accepted in

the very general sense given to it, as the ethical doctrine that attaches itself to an end, we must also accept Comte's social principle. If there were no element of love, or altruism, or imaginative sympathy in human nature, I do not see how it would be possible to arrive at any morality at all. In deductions of virtues from happiness as the end, such a principle, when it is not expressly stated, is tacitly presupposed. Or, if it is not, there is a fallacy in the argument. An egoistic deduction of obligation, for example, may have its merits, since the element of seeking one's own good has its place in a comparison of claims; but if no motives but egoistic ones are allowed to come in, the omission is ultimately fatal. To have insisted on the sympathetic and morally disinterested element in human nature is one of Comte's greatest merits. Of course, he had been preceded by a long line of ethical thinkers from the latter part of the seventeenth century onward; but no one has made the general position more explicit as against the assumption by the once predominant theological schools of a natural pure egoism of human nature so far as it remains unmodified by supernatural grace. It was precisely this assumption, adopted dialectically by some anti-theologians also, that made necessary the express antithesis between egoism and altruism, and the demonstration that the latter exists by nature.

In classical antiquity the distinction was usually left vaguer. Even more frequently than in modern times, arguments about happiness mix up the social with the individual reference indiscriminately. It is commonly assumed that we care something for the welfare of others, and less interest is taken in determining the relative original strength of "self-regarding" and "extra-regarding" impulses. The principle of love, however, was on occasion quite distinctly formulated. The phrase "*caritas*

generis humani" occurs in Cicero; and the idea is not put forward as new in philosophy, but as so old that the more recent schools, such as the Stoics, ought not to claim it as distinctively their own.

How, then, shall we proceed from this idea to those of freedom and justice? The answer is, simply by the consideration that humanity arrives at consciousness, so far as we know, only in the individual. Happiness is the happiness of a personality. This personality is, indeed, fundamentally social. In its origin in time, that is to say, it is a social product. And much of its activity is necessarily related to impersonal ends of society. At the same time, this activity is always itself personal. Thus the ultimate realisation of social aims is in the individual. Now, for individual happiness autonomy is necessary. The activity by which the ethical end is attained becomes possible only in freedom. The internal freedom here primarily meant can, of course, be achieved by some natures even in a hostile society. And we know that in human life, even at its freest, there cannot be absolute freedom from all constraining conditions. Between one polity and another, however, there are differences correlated with the reigning type of ethics. In our ideal polity it is clear that the aim would be to make the constraining conditions subservient. No personality would be conceived as a mere means to the attainment of their ends by others, or to the better carrying on of some objective process. So far as it is equivalent to absence of constraint by other wills, or by some mechanical or quasi-mechanical order, freedom has a negative sense. So far as its meaning is that the personality energises in a manner determined by its own nature or by voluntary choice, it has a positive sense. In politics the sense tends rather to the negative side, though not necessarily to the exclusion of all positive provision of means to realise

freedom. In ethics it becomes positive, as in Spinoza's conception of the "free man."

Justice is not itself to be identified with this moral freedom or autonomy; but, when regarded with a view to its end, it is the most important condition of freedom. Without a recognised system of reciprocal rights and duties, a society of freemen cannot hold together. And the rights and duties must be regarded as fundamentally between equals. The question of merit and proportionate distribution of social goods may come in as a refinement; but primarily the assumption must be that all are to be treated alike. All alike must be entitled, when the terms of the bargain are equal, to claim the fulfilment of a contract. To this primary, contractual form of justice Hobbes restricted the term. "Distributive justice," or assignment of social goods in proportion to merit, he regarded as not properly coming under the head of justice at all. On grounds of equal egoistic right, he was able to deduce in considerable detail the generally accepted rules of justice; thus illustrating the fundamental importance of the idea of equality. And it must be remembered that for Hobbes, in spite of his defence of absolute monarchy, freedom in the political sense above defined is an end of the social union. The absolute monarch is there to secure this in the most efficacious manner. In fact, Hobbes's general view might serve very well to illustrate the position of Comte, that monarchy is the first form of the revolutionary transition from the dominion of hierarchs and the system of caste.

But suppose the question put: Why should any effort be made to establish the new type of society, whether in a more rudimentary or in a more advanced form? It certainly does not come without conscious effort. And a society ostensibly recognising legal equality has so far turned out relatively unstable. Aristotle made the remark

that polities are broken up through real or supposed infractions of justice. Why not keep out the explosive in the interests of social order? A system of inherited status, custom and routine, command and obedience, tempered by more or less kindly consideration on the one side and gratitude on the other—in short, the hierocratic system taken as his model by Comte—is the most stable of all when the cry for social justice either has not been heard or can be effectively suppressed. Here the answer at once takes us beyond the attempt to deduce justice wholly from egoism. We must care for liberty (and not dominion or comfortable submission) for ourselves, and then for the establishment of an order that can realise it for others. That is, action must be, in greater or less degree, from the principle of love. Not every one, indeed, who is animated by the principle of love will seek this end. There have, of course, been benevolent despots; and obedience may be from love as well as from fear. To take us beyond this type of social relations there must be the feeling for autonomy, or inward law of personal action, which the despot, benevolent or other, will call self-will; but it must be combined with altruism. Altruism in general, sympathy or compassion, is in fact more primitive than the sense of justice. It is found in all types of society. The sense of justice is later and more intellectualised; without primordial altruism it would never have come into being.

This may be illustrated by the extremely ancient maxim which Hobbes accepts as the general rule of justice and as a compendious substitute for its particular laws. The form he prefers in stating it as a test is the negative one: *Do not that to another which thou wouldest not have done to thyself.* Whether this or the positive form is preferred, the appeal is clearly to imaginative sympathy. The transition is taking place from this to the intellectual

idea of reciprocal obligation. Logically, the difference between the two forms of the maxim is immaterial; but rational moralists in general have inclined to prefer the negative form. This is the form to be met with in Isocrates and in Confucius. Of course, neither the Greek rhetorician nor the Chinese sage was the inventor of it; it already belonged to the wisdom of nations. It has its application in any social order, and could scarcely be used politically to suggest modifications in a given order. Within an actual system of ranks, whether inherited or acquired, its subjective use may, with goodwill, give the nearest approximation to justice. The person about to act is to imagine himself in the position, whatever that may be, of the person in relation to whom he is, and consider how the intended action would then appear to himself. The question whether those relative positions ought to continue or not seems out of its range. Thus its general recognition is common to the society of "duties without rights" and to the society in which the principles of human right were beginning to be formulated.

A point recognised in all schools is that maxims like this, when considered by themselves, make a more forcible appeal to the moral consciousness than such deductions of them from ends as are attempted by utilitarians. And this, it may be observed, applies to maxims not only of justice, but of prudence. Examples of both kinds might be selected from the Book of Proverbs, or from the Gospels, or from Diogenes Laertius. The instantaneous æsthetic impression of a compact saying by a known or unknown author is superior to that of the chain of argument by which a later systematic thinker may seek to give it support. For life also the guidance of a general rule is commonly safer than the attempt to think out the effects of an action in detail. This is partly explicable because a general rule is the stored-up wisdom of many.

But is there not in the maxims of justice, as the *a priori* moralists say, something more? Is there not some mysterious obligation that overrides all ends whatever if these conflict with the law of duty and right?

This, the view of Kant's *Practical Reason*, is undoubtedly impressive. Yet it must be observed that adherents of this view, while making it ostensibly independent of all metaphysics, proceed from it to a metaphysic of their own. Usually this is stated in the theistic form, that the moral law is a command of God, and that final good is assured as the result of obedience to the divine command. A pantheistic expression might equally well be given to it. Conformity with the idea of justice, it might be said, leads by an immanent process to the realisation of final good; and in this belief we must follow our moral intuition in defiance of any calculation of interest for ourselves, or even for society, when this interest seems incompatible with the moral law. The mysterious character of the feeling points to conformity between the law within and the order of the universe. Now, either of these metaphysical views would bring the moral law finally into relation with an end, known or unknown. The strange result is that only on the hypothesis of Atheism would it be absolutely independent. Kant, indeed, holds that on this hypothesis, too, it would still be valid. Yet the philosophical theory, that human morality stands out in absolute antithesis against a non-moral order of things, was precisely that which the doctrine of the practical reason was devised to avoid.

As a matter of fact, *a priori* moralists, including Kant himself, find themselves under the constant necessity of introducing reference to ends of desire. Charles Renouvier, firmly as he adheres to Kant in principle, has to allow the want of genuine "objectivity" in the Kantian maxims. The science of morality is for him also not

strictly analogous to mathematics. The occasional rigorism or fanaticism of Kant's moral doctrine is made to disappear under the stress of practical, and especially of political, applications. But we must go further. That which has an appearance of concession to practice, when more closely examined, presents itself as revision in relation to ultimate principles. Suppose knowledge of consequences ideally complete, then, in the light of this, the exceptions to anything we can lay down for ourselves as a law would be instantaneously evident, and we could act freely with a sense of superiority to law. In politics this is the position assigned by Plato to his guardians of the State, trained by dialectic to adequate knowledge of the ideal good. And, although no human knowledge is so complete as this, we can frequently, by reference to ends philosophically conceived, make clear the extreme imperfection in practice of ethico-political maxims which have at first sight an air of self-evidence. Thus the idea of end is the vital centre. Maxims in the form of laws, if not constantly tested by it, become starting-points for the most lifeless casuistry.

This is quite consistent with the view that doctrines of "natural rights" have come to be underrated both as regards theoretical validity and practical effect. According to the position taken, they have the claim to consideration that is generally allowed to *axiomata media* and to the maxims of sages. They were the last result of a long mental development from the time of Aristotle to the Stoics and the Roman jurists, and thence through mediæval doctors to modern publicists engaged on practical problems. The statement in the American Declaration of Independence, that human beings have the right to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," commends itself at once to the general mind as setting up a political ideal that ought to be aimed at. Yet, when it is put as

if absolute, without reference to any more definite common good, it becomes barren. Contemplation of it as a formal principle, with attempts at more and more subtle deductions from it, will not help us. In fact, no formal maxim reveals more clearly the necessity of returning from the idea of law to that of end.

For the value of the rights claimed depends on the quality of the "life," on the possibilities involved in the "liberty" secured, and on the kind of "happiness" attainable. The social structure may be such as to allow of practically no liberty but the liberty, by skilful bargaining, to achieve success in a world of universal industrial competition. Now, even if the struggle were on equal terms, the presence of formal law would not make the achievement of this type seem an adequate result of age-long effort. But the equality is merely nominal. In a system of private property—which is nevertheless essential to liberty—the struggle cannot remain equal, since at any point of time some will have gained and others will have lost. This would still be true if the competitors began equal; but in our societies no time is historically traceable when they did. Modern social and economic conditions do not tend to redress the inequality. On the contrary, the greater the progress of accumulation by which the wealth of society is increased, the more unequal the struggle between individuals becomes. Whatever formal conditions may be laid down, so long as the ends of competitive industrialism are supreme, they contain no hope of fundamental modification. If the end of life is happiness in the exclusive possession of material goods, then the result at best can only be a sort of Neo-Vandalism. Let each fight for the greatest share of particular good things, but let all "play the game" now of commerce as formerly of war.

To make a difference we need a change of opinion;

and for this we need a return to the philosophic analysis of good. The problem is to form a conception of a kind of good that is distinctively human and that can be shared. Now philosophers, and in general those who have a regard for the Hellenic tradition from which European civilisation set out, place this good as a rule (whatever form of words they may choose) in culture. Some may lay more stress on one element, some on another; but that is the common result. For the distinguishing characteristic of man is to be able to think and speak. And language, in a generalised sense, includes expression not only in words, but in other ways, as by music and by plastic and pictorial art. By a slight extension of the familiar definition, to know the best that has been thought and said, or in any way expressed, may be called "culture." This does not need great material appliances; though it supposes a society that has accumulated something beyond the bare means of subsistence. Given this, there is the possibility of leisure; and the conditions of life on the planet do not in themselves forbid its equitable distribution. Culture, therefore, as distinguished from material luxury, is the human and sharable good of which we are in search. If the social structure tends to encourage the kind of individual activity from which it springs, and at the same time to promote its social diffusion, a formulated statement of equal rights and reciprocal obligations has value in providing a basis for the higher activity of man. But, in itself, the formal law can tell us nothing about the happiness to be pursued.

With slight omissions, I have left this Chapter as it at first appeared, though I do not now think it possible to establish ethical or political justice on a purely experiential basis. For a more exact philosophical analysis and synthesis the reader must be referred to *The Theory of Abstract Ethics* (Cambridge; 1916). In

that small treatise, which may be regarded as a companion to this, I recognise with the *a priori* moralists that there are principles of justice which are rationally valid without reference to feelings; though I agree, at the same time, with the experientialists in regarding ends of desire as rightly the positive determinants of action. The result of this re-admission of "the *a priori*" is the perhaps unexpected one that there is a relaxing of austerity as regards ends. To take over the permanent truth in Kant rids us more radically of the Kantian or similar exaggerations than Utilitarianism can. In qualification, for example, of the dominant position here claimed for culture, I have put it definitely that "the good for different types is various" (*Theory of Abstract Ethics*, chap. vi, p. 92). Culture as an end is the personal choice of some types; but from actual States we perhaps cannot ask more than that they should permit it to exist. If they do, we may congratulate ourselves. Even in Aristotle's view, his own ideal of a "culture-State" was one that required very special circumstances for its realisation; and he did little more than set it up as an ideal without showing definitely how it could be realised. In modern times Spinoza, having arrived at a view essentially identical, that the highest good for man is rational insight (*Eth.* iv, Prop. 26: "quicquid ex ratione conamur, nihil aliud est quam intelligere"), did not apply his notion of this good of the mind—though it is for him a common and sharable good—to politics, but treated political society as rightly consisting of many kinds of persons, each striving for good as understood by themselves from inadequate ideas (*Eth.* iv, Prop. 37, Schol. 2). It is for such that the politician has to legislate; a truth of course very fully recognised by Aristotle in the *Politics* taken as a whole, as it was by Spinoza in his political treatises. And this is not a mere concession to the weakness of ordinary human nature, which cannot aim at the highest—namely, philosophic insight; for Spinoza makes joy, as such, universally a good. "Nihil profecto nisi torva et tristis superstitio delectari prohibet" (*Eth.* iv, Prop. 45, Schol. 2).

Chapter III

FROM THE ANCIENT TO THE MODERN REPUBLIC

Some commonplaces are true; and one of these is that modern political institutions of the kind we call free had their beginning in Greece. This has usually been taken to mean, not that here was the beginning of a transition essentially anarchical and leading to a replacement, in new modes, of the old Asiatic order against which the Greeks first stood out, but that something was founded for Europe, however imperfectly. Before trying to state precisely what this was, it may be well to recall briefly the claims of the older Eastern civilisation. For this had really done a great positive work. And there is still an anti-Hellenic current of opinion, not visibly declining in strength, and ready to insist on everything that can be said in favour of the "priests and tyrants" sc misunderstood and misinterpreted, as the romantic reaction urged, by those "prejudices of the eighteenth century" which summed themselves up in the type of opinion known as the "Enlightenment."

We may admit that the old theocratic monarchies furnished the outline of a social order that lasted for ages; and that not only the Greeks, but their successors the Romans, with all their practical organising power, failed to establish anything of comparable stability. Hence, in the European Middle Age, a return was made to the Oriental type. In this new theocratico-monarchical order many cultivated minds still find their religious and artistic if not political ideal; and, since it definitively

broke down, the European world has run into a phase in which no one who looks beyond the day or the hour can acquiesce. In fact, we are now more than ever confronted with the question whether modern Europe is capable of solving the social problems which the Græco-Roman world failed to solve. Is the transition, then, after all, anything but an anarchy, to be replaced by some new social authority that shall carry out with complete scientific insight the work planned and in part accomplished by the Eastern theocrats?

The services of these to civilisation may justifiably be dwelt on. The Greeks themselves, Comte remarks, though by their resistance they broke the old order, yet always continued to speak with gratitude of the preliminary elaboration of astronomy and geometry, and so forth, by the priesthoods of Egypt and Chaldæa. The foundations of industrial civilisation were laid so firmly by that order that they lasted, with comparatively little new invention, till modern times. Greek rational science, as distinguished from the empirical science out of which it sprang, remained only a branch of culture for the few. It was industrially applied on the great scale only after its further development by the nations of modern Europe. And, now that it has undergone this development, have we not the new and fashionable philosophy of Pragmatism trying to bring it back to the pre-Hellenic phase? The Greeks and the early moderns (say, before the "industrial revolution") would appear to have attained hardly anything of their own that can be called scientific truth. For truth is that which will work in practice; and their discoveries had little application to the useful arts. True science, therefore, is mainly that of Oriental theocracy and modern industrialism. Thus, from the point of view of this pre-eminently modern school, as of Comte, new industrialism would be old theocracy writ

large. Its necessary completion would seem to be a hierocratic organisation. A sacerdotal class is needed to limit science to investigations bearing on practical utility, and to hold in check the "revolutionary metaphysics" in which it forgets its limitations and becomes a subversive instead of a constructive force.

Not to press the topic of Pragmatism, the apology could be continued on serious lines. The ancient hierarchs, it might fairly be said, committed no such crimes against humanity as their Byzantine and Papal and Russian successors. The order through which they ruled was no doubt very conservative and somewhat oppressive; but they did not deliberately oppose the search for new knowledge. The fault was mainly in the complex structure; and this was inevitable in the first great elaboration of civilised life. Though relatively unspeculative as compared with the Brahmans of India, the priesthoods may even have passed on some philosophic insight as well as scientific knowledge to Greece. Heraclitus and Æschylus may have derived from them indirectly the hint of an esoteric Monotheism or Pantheism. What, after all, can the Greeks claim for themselves? Were not those Christian Fathers right who called them the plagiarists of the "barbarians"? Let us, then, forgetting the aberrations of the later theocracy, which, with Comte, we may attribute to the theological doctrine of the Middle Age, and not to its type of social order, return from the "rights of man" to a system directed from above by the wise and benevolent, chosen by men of like kind. What can be in substance more rational?

There is no difficulty about the answer. Whatever had been done before, the Greeks, in founding self-government and free philosophy, went on to a higher phase. Both these achievements were in reality some-

thing positive, not negative and anarchic. If either idea were to be lost or permanently subordinated to authoritative external tradition, that would mean that a higher end had become visible on earth than man was ever to attain. Progress, to which the theorists of authority appeal, would be an illusion.

It is with the idea of self-government that we are at present concerned. The new thing that arose in Greece was the self-governing commonwealth, the Republic. The germs of this existed in the mixed political constitution of which traces are to be met with in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. After the Homeric period, without violent revolution, the constitutional king became the president of an oligarchy, the office usually ceasing in the end to be hereditary. At a later stage the democratic element in the State (vaguely present from the beginning) stripped the oligarchy of its privileges and assumed full control. The essential idea, whether the commonwealth was aristocratic or democratic, was that there should be no irresponsible power. The temporary wielder of power held it from the community, and was responsible to the State.

A stage often intermediate in time between oligarchy and democracy was the system called by the Greeks "tyranny." This was not a return to the old heroic kingship, but was essentially an imitation, on a small scale, of the institutions of the East. The "tyrant"—no doubt an able and enlightened man—put an end to the struggles of aristocratic and democratic factions (often siding first with the latter) and ruled irresponsibly. His watchword, as has already been suggested, might have been "order and progress." His natural allies were popular religion, more especially the peasant cults, on the one side, and the great Persian monarchy on the other. With this he could easily put himself on friendly

terms. He could be regarded as an outlying member of what was in theory a world-wide officialdom, keeping the peace in his city and promoting useful public works. Nor was he indifferent to the arts and sciences. Poets and philosophers were invited to his court. Yet the Greek world stamped the name of tyrant with the extremest reprobation. He was out of the law, and to kill him was an act of supreme virtue. Plato, according to the story embodied in the Epistles attributed to him,[1]

[1] In the latter part of the nineteenth century the opinion of scholars seemed to be agreed in rejecting the "Epistles of Plato." Professor Lewis Campbell, who did one of the most decisive pieces of work in settling the chronological order of the Dialogues, treated the whole story of Plato's intervention in Sicilian politics as a romance. Professor Burnet, in the first edition of his *Early Greek Philosophy*, took the same view. Since then, he and Professor A. E. Taylor have investigated the Epistles again, and accept them as genuine, chiefly on the ground, I believe, that the style is not distinguishable by philological tests from that of the later Dialogues, and especially of the *Laws*. This I accept on their authority; but it does not seem to me to dispose of the arguments on the other side, which will probably be heard of again. If the story is a romance, it may have had its origin in a passage of the *Laws* where the "Athenian Stranger" suggests that the most effective way of bringing a new system of legislation into action would be that the ideas of a great legislator should be taken up by a young and vigorous despot contemporary with him. This, a sceptic might argue, first put it into some one's head to imagine the philosopher himself as personally engaged in the scheme of Dion (of whom it is extremely probable that he was a friend) for guiding the younger Dionysius into the paths of reform on Pythagorean or Academic principles. It is possible also, and even likely, that the known friendship of Plato and members of the Academy with Pythagoreans of Magna Græcia started a good deal of Athenian gossip as to their share in the events at Syracuse. The gossip would naturally grow in volume as time went on. Aristotle, who must have known of Plato's intervention if real, since he was a pupil in the Academy at the time, tells us in the *Politics* several tangible and interesting details about the relations between Dionysius II and Dion, but gives not a hint of the story as it appears in the Epistles, in Plutarch's Life of Dion, and (with variations) in the legends of the philosophers. In the whole of the *Politics* Plato is never referred to as one of the projectors who had actively intervened in attempts to reform the government of States, but always as the political speculator whose ideals were most remote from the

had hoped to get his own schemes of political reform carried out by a Sicilian despot. Yet in his theory of the degenerations of the State the tyrant is made the antithesis of the just man: even when successful he is the most miserable of mortals, and in the picture of the life after death he is represented as everlastingly damned.

This sprang from a profound instinct. It was felt that the permanent success of an efficient tyranny would be the most irreparable of evils, nullifying all that Greece meant for the human race. The able despot, of course, might do work that was of real value, like Napoleon afterwards, in so far as he was the "soldier of revolution." In the process of centralising administration, old tribal or clan distinctions, for example, were effaced, so that a larger civic patriotism could afterwards get unobstructed course. The same kind of work, however, could be done by disinterested legislators, who refused kingly sway when it was offered. The tyrant's aim at personal power thus destroyed his case ethically. And in classical antiquity the condemnation of the type was never withdrawn. Long after the Roman world had become a monarchy, the biographer of Julius Cæsar, having put on record his repeated acts of clemency, could nevertheless say of the man who had made himself the master of what was once a free state, "*Jure periit.*" Not till a new religion had re-consecrated monarchy was opinion reversed. For the supreme poet of the Christian Middle Age, two of the criminals in the lowest depths of hell are Brutus and Cassius, the slayers of the successful tyrant.

norm of Hellenic life. There is interest in observing how much more powerful and impressive Wordsworth has made his poem of *Dion* by simply representing Plato as remaining in Dion's imagination the revered figure of his instructor in philosophic virtue at Athens than he could have done by introducing the head of the Academy as an actual participator in the Sicilian revolution. It seems as if the poet had tacitly rejected the story.

Each judgment, in turn, was not so much individual as the reflex of a social type.[1]

But, it is often said, are we to look for a genuine type of freedom to the military and slave-holding states of antiquity, simply because they were called republics? The reply might very well be that the problem was first to form a society, large or small, of equals, refusing to submit on any terms to the personal authority of a master. A society of this kind once formed, the feelings and ideas it cherishes within itself can afterwards spread abroad. Members of the unprivileged orders can acquire, where there is something of a common culture, a sense of their own intrinsic equality, and can by degrees assert their right to a share in the government. Nor is there any limit to the process. This reply is to a considerable extent valid. Ideas of liberty and equality spread downwards from political aristocracies. In a hierocracy or a despotism they do not appear except by communication from other societies. Thus the sophistic appeal to democracy on behalf of despots who have reduced the privileged and unprivileged orders to a common servitude falls to the ground. But there is also a fuller reply. Modern advances on the ancient type of free State, though in some respects real, are far from being immeasurable. To set the nominal equality of rights, for example, between rich and poor in modern law against the actual distinctions of class in antiquity is too transparent a fallacy. Suppose that by way of retort the repudiation of the name of subject by an ancient Athenian were set

[1] Yet elements of Roman republican and even of anti-Cæsarist tradition ran on through the Middle Ages and are to be found in Dante himself. Cato—a sterner republican than Brutus and Cassius—is the guardian of Purgatory; the Tribune Metellus is glorified for resisting Cæsar's breaking into the Treasury (*Purg.* ix, 136–8); and Curio is in Malebolge for his supposed counsel to Cæsar not to hesitate in starting the Civil War (*Inf.* xxviii, 91–102).

against the royalist forms of command used in a modern constitutional State. This, too, would be misleading. We must compare ideal with ideal and fact with fact, not ideal on the one side with fact on the other.

In the fuller reply the point about "militarism" may first be set aside. The fluctuating relations between the industrial and the military mechanism of societies—both, so far, indispensable—have no title to be dignified with the name of a law of progress. The attempt to assign to them this rank is as palpable a failure in Spencer as in Comte. With both thinkers the supposed law of transition from militarism to industrialism appears to have been a sweeping generalisation from their own period; which was in many ways really progressive, while it was an age of growing industrialism. Comte's exposition in his later work seems at first sight hardly reconcilable with it. For the change from "conservative" to "progressive" polytheism, in his view, accompanies the passage from an essentially industrial to a military civilisation. Still, it might be replied, the military period is for him, taken by itself, mainly an anarchy, and is only of value in preparing the way for a more socialised industrialism; so that the "law of progress" is not abandoned in substance. Clearly, however, his expectation that the decline of militarism in Europe would go on continuously has been falsified by events. Again, Spencer, in his later years, while not abandoning his view which associates industrialism with growing freedom, was obliged to admit its oppressiveness in our own time. Freedom of contract under it, he confessed, is little more than nominal; and its effect on the individual worker is both physically and mentally deteriorating.

Of course industry is a necessary basis of all societies; and Comte, even in his utopia, did not look forward to a society that could dispense with everything of the nature

of an army. Thus there is no absolute antithesis. The proportion between the organisation for material support and for attack and defence is one of greater and less. Militarism and industrialism, in the special senses, might seem to be opposite forms of hypertrophy, subordinating the real ends of the community to what ought to be means. Unfortunately they have not even the advantage of being incompatible. Indeed, without intensive industrialism for basis, modern militarism would have been impossible. And it would be difficult to show that there is greater effective freedom—a sufficient range of time and space being taken—in highly industrial as compared with highly military societies. The "militarism" of the Greek cities was to a great extent a defensive organisation for maintaining the freedom of small communities against the apparently overwhelming mass of empires proportionally more industrial in basis. Sparta, with all its militarism, was not aggressive. And that militarism, in the greatest crisis of human history, had its part in defending the freedom of the Western world.

So far as slavery is concerned, it is only quite recently that modern States can claim to have definitely advanced on antiquity. The last century has seen the slow abolition, perhaps not yet fully accomplished, of what began as colonial slavery established with the sanction of European governments. Still, it may be said, compare one of the more advanced countries of Europe, apart from its colonies, with a Greek democracy. Of England, for example, it has been true for some centuries that none of its inhabitants are slaves. That could never be said of ancient Athens. Then, usually, a completely false inference is drawn. Athens, it is inferred, though nominally a democracy, was really a community of idlers living on slave labour. From the literature of Athens in the fifth century B.C. it can be conclusively proved that this

was not so. The Athenian democracy included all normal classes, free artisans forming a numerous body. Slavery, though it undoubtedly existed and spread in Greece, was not from the beginning an integral part of a Greek community. Its growth, as an eminent living historian has shown, was due essentially to capitalism. The status of slavery may have had its origin in the custom of taking prisoners of war; but, as Meyer says, these can never have been of much use industrially. The slaves were in the main imported from the East. They were employed in the larger industrial undertakings, and the result was the displacement of free labour. So far, therefore, was slavery from being the true industrial basis of an ancient State that, by reducing the poorer freemen to beggary, it contributed to the failure of the more democratic polities. This, it may be noted by the way, sufficiently refutes the view of some modern anti-democratic writers that democracy was possible in Greece only because it meant really government by a privileged class.

The remark may also be made incidentally that the retrospective optimism of Comte and Spencer as regards slavery is deprived of its justification. It was not by passing through the stage of slavery that mankind was trained to industry. For slavery is properly a Western and not an Eastern institution; and in the West it is an excrescence, and, as we have seen, a pernicious excrescence. In the East, indeed, some were distinctly slaves; but the characteristic institution of the East was caste. Slavery did not greatly develop, as it did under Western capitalism. Thus, where it was less pernicious because there was no political freedom to undermine, it was still clearly unnecessary. It appears, therefore, everywhere as a degradation and a wrong. Its part in the process of the world is that of an evil, and not of a relative good. The true positive origin of industries was not compulsion

to work for a master, but the differentiation of aptitudes in a tribe. Spencer himself traces out this process, and then shows how coercion of various kinds came to be superimposed. Evidently, neither social nor individual coercion could create an aptitude for doing even the simplest work that had not been done before. And to enforce continuity of labour there seems no reason why physical needs should not have sufficed.

The point is, not that slavery could in fact have been avoided, given an element of "radical evil" (as Kant expressed it) in human nature, but that it has its root in evil. This is part of the whole process as we know it; but, in metaphysical language, it is that in it which has to be overcome. To return to the empirical facts: it must be allowed that the other kinds of force are capable of being as oppressive as the morally more anomalous form called slavery. To be a member, say, of a low caste of unskilled workers is not formally the same as being owned by another person, but it may in practice be little better. The position of an unskilled worker under nominally free contract is in some respects worst of all. There is no limit to the hours of labour that may be imposed; and in compensation there is not even security. The slaveowner had at least an economic interest in caring for the life and physical welfare of his slave. All this, it may be said, tends to show a nearer approach to equality in the conditions of the mass of mankind than might be inferred from the formal institutions. Where institutions are on the whole better, the actual conditions may, in some details, be worse. It is generally recognised, for example, that domestic slavery among the Greeks was relatively mild as compared with modern colonial slavery. For the extreme harshness of slaveowning, as practised by Englishmen so late as the eighteenth century, Bishop Butler can be cited as a witness. Yet it had already

become more inconsistent with accepted institutions than it was at Athens.

Though formal slavery was not characteristically Eastern, it appeared to a Greek that "among the barbarians all are slaves but one." "Slave" might even be a term of honour. All prided themselves on being slaves of the king. To the Greeks, although slavery grew up among them in its distinctive form of personal ownership, it was essentially antipathetic. At first it presented itself as an expression of might exercised by the stronger for his advantage. An ethical defence was hardly thought of. The question of justice not being raised, to be made a slave was from the slave's point of view simply a misfortune. There was no divinely appointed place for him, as for the low castes in a hierarchy. Virtue being conceived in a broadly human sense, and not simply as specialised function, the popular view was that the slave tended to be a worse type morally. In being only "useful" and not an end for himself, he was on a lower level. As the ethical idea of human right appeared, there came radical protests against the institution. It was argued that a man is not a slave by nature, but by fortune. One in the position of a slave may have the virtues of a freeman, while the nominal freeman may be slavish in mind. Against such arguments, the reply of Aristotle was that, some men being slaves by nature, these may rightly be subjected by force and made, by their labour, instrumental to the higher life of others. The hope of emancipation, however, was to be held out. Both among the Greeks and among the Romans emancipations were, in fact, constantly going on. And Aristotle's defence was not permanently adopted either by the philosophers or by the lawyers. In Roman juristic theory, the Stoical view prevailed that slavery was from the beginning "contrary to nature"; though the jurists

accepted it as a fact of prescription. Yet, while the slave continued to be regarded as property, his position was gradually mitigated by legislation. The historical process in the West tended towards abolition of the status, precisely because its anomalous character was necessarily recognised as reflection proceeded. While itself the worst form of social iniquity, "chattel slavery" was less ingrained than institutions claiming a divine sanction for their oppressiveness.

In an ancient as in a modern democracy it could not have been permanent; but the democracies themselves ceased. The important thing to notice is how far they had gone when the check came. In reality, there is no form of advanced modern speculation about political and social institutions that had not appeared at Athens. Aristophanes would not have set himself to ridicule ideas of communism and equal rights for women if such ideas had not been put forward by some persons. It has been thought that he was caricaturing Plato; but, as the scheme in the *Republic* is of an entirely different nature and is never clearly alluded to by the dramatist, the probabilities are that both the comic and the serious development started from ideas already afloat. These we may suppose to have been originally democratic, and more resembling those of the comedy.

It is noteworthy that Plato, in his scheme of aristocratic communism, surmounted slavery. There is no proper place for the institution in the society he plans out. The philosophic and military classes form a higher caste, the commercial and industrial classes a lower caste. As the scheme of communism does not extend to the latter, they are, from the point of view of a modern political economist, in a state of greater freedom. And the system of caste was to be rationalised, so far as this was compatible with public acceptance of a fiction which

Plato saw to be necessary as its groundwork. It was to be taught and believed that the gods had formed the higher classes of more precious material; and yet, if any one born in their rank was found to be naturally inferior, he was to be depressed to a lower position, while any one born in a lower rank, but found to be naturally superior, was to be taken up into the higher.

Plato discusses the education only of the governing classes. This we may ascribe, not to neglect, but to the fact that in a Greek State the problem of elementary education, as now understood, had solved itself. The Greek past had not been a period in which the arts of reading and writing were confined to a priesthood. Thus they made way naturally in proportion as they became serviceable for life; and no inherited jealousy limited the means of access. At Athens they were as widely diffused as they are in a modern democracy after two or three generations of systematic effort. Here the loss of political freedom in the ancient world made no difference. The new authorities that first arose did not feel themselves dependent on a limitation of popular culture. Throughout the Roman Empire there was provision for elementary education, besides institutions for higher instruction. Modern research has fully confirmed the general impression summed up in the name of "dark ages" applied to the succeeding period. Barbarism and Christian theocracy for a time reduced culture, whether higher or elementary, to a minimum that barely sufficed to preserve the continuity of European civilisation. Since the "revival of learning" a tradition of neglect has had to be slowly overcome; and the very destruction of the theocracy has aided the tradition. Despots and friends of despotism, warned by the convulsions that followed increasing light, came to see in popular ignorance a safe support. And, precisely where this cause

has been less in action, the furious quarrels of sects long thwarted the efforts alike of the State and of private philanthropy. In antiquity there was, of course, no question of any corporate authority over education save that of the State.

But for the factors now indicated, it would be difficult to explain, not why there has been some progress in modern times, but why that progress has been so late and so slow and so interrupted. The answer is to be found in the nature of the intermediate period. This meant, so far as directing ideas are concerned, the return of monarchy, theocracy, and caste. Monarchy, in fact, came in with the Cæsarean revolution, theocracy with Constantine; the system of caste was established in legal theory in the early Byzantine period. At that time it was made unlawful for the cultivators of the soil to leave their hereditary occupation. Into the class which afterwards became that of "serfs" were absorbed at once slaves and the smaller freemen. This process went on not only in the East, but in the rising Teutonic communities. By the teachers of the new religion the status of slavery had been sanctioned, like monarchy, as part of the divine order. Christian slaves were even exhorted by some apostolic and patristic writers not to seek emancipation. The economic conditions, however, had become hostile to slavery proper. By degrees they became hostile to serfdom as well. The ferment of old ideas also remained, with the literature which contained them, though these did not count practically till quite modern times. When institutions of the nature of slavery again began to seem contrary to justice as formulated in theories of natural rights, it was easy to reinforce the attack by various passages in the New Testament equally opposed to them in their inner spirit. Christianity, we must remember, is a complex religion. The

apprehensions of its official teachers as to the consequences of popular acquaintance with its documents at last caused them to prohibit the reading of translations that had been made of them into the vernacular languages of Europe. For a time the appeal to ideas of fraternity and equality in the Gospels came chiefly from heterodox Christians. Orthodoxy, however, at length gave its sanction to the modern movement, and now almost claims for its dogma the merit of having abolished slavery.

The Middle Ages, like their religion, were extremely complex. The directing ideas of the period were essentially those of the ancient East, dominating a newer community that had failed to carry forward the ideas of its prime. But within the mediæval European system, ruled over by priests and anointed kings, there were the strivings of peoples newly incorporated, and only now reaching the stage represented by the heroic monarchies of Greece. A portion of the ancient culture, civic and not hieratic, was also a necessity to the priesthood, which could not rule without some superiority in knowledge, and which felt the intellectual insufficiency of its own documents. Thus the vague efforts of new populations after political freedom could, in time, be reinforced. Discussions, indeed, were for long to go on only within a limited circle and in a learned language. Popular education—except in the form of religious spectacle and the hearing of selections from a sacred literature—was not an interest cherished by the directing class. Yet the way was being prepared for later popular movements. And, economically, the Middle Ages were exempt from many of the evils of capitalism. Thus, as the towns grew, the crafts that developed from germs left by the arts of life in their ancient centres could be practised by free workmen, with a pleasure in the exercise of their

skill which modern machine industry has tended to destroy.

It is this essentially progressive growth of one kind and another that fascinates modern historians, and gives them a certain impatience with the attitude of the Renaissance and the eighteenth century. The sweeping condemnation of the Middle Ages, however, in a time that had still some immediate consciousness of having emerged from them, referred essentially to their directing ideas. The very intermixture of ill-understood progressive movements in the actual period may have seemed to add to it something peculiarly irrational and inorganic. The East, with its definitely monarchic and theocratic order, was fairly intelligible. In general outline it was part of the classical picture of the world. But what was to be made of the confused alliance of this order with military anarchy? Here were caste and graduated subjection side by side with municipal experiments in democracy. The priesthood was a peculiar kind of caste. In theory the highest rank, it was drawn from all classes of society, and offered an opening to personal merit. Yet, being always in its ideal and at length by absolute compulsion celibate, it did not promote social flux. New families could not in general be founded by men who rose to ecclesiastical eminence. And while the clergy in a manner represented culture, like the old Oriental priesthoods, its teaching, having been first elaborated in a cultivated medium hostile to it, systematically depreciated knowledge. Thus chiefs of the only educated class could declaim officially against the rudiments of liberal education. It is really not surprising that the period was for long called simply barbarous. To penetrate to its humanly valuable elements, there has been needed the most resolute and studious interest in the most complex detail.

There has also been needed the many-sided sympathy evoked by what is called the "romantic movement." This was in part reactionary, and would have liked to see a realisation of the hierarchical theory never, in fact, realised in the actual Middle Age. The most distinctive character of a romantic movement, however, does not seem to be that of a reaction. What is common to all movements described by the name is rather a kind of contemplative interest in the past as past. It is æsthetic emotion finding its object in reflected instead of direct experience. Thus it supposes a long past incompletely remembered. A movement of the kind was making itself felt towards the end of classical antiquity, both Greek and Roman. Old stories were being put in new and more varied lights, and the shades of feeling we call "modern" were finding expression. The superposition of a new religious order stopped this particular movement. The Christian Fathers were not romanticists. When next the same spirit appeared it expressed itself in new languages and in new forms. From this period, starting in the eleventh century, all such movements have received their distinctive name. "Romance" meant neo-Roman. Its characteristic matter consisted in old legends, and its literary form combined a revival with the originality due remotely to a break in culture. The later classical revival called the Renaissance has an essentially different character. There is not in it the half-pathetic looking back to an order which the world is conscious of having transcended. Types of life and thought and art believed to be higher, and in this case really higher, were being deliberately revived. The classical revival was continued in the eighteenth century, but on the side of literature and art in a more restricted way. Simultaneously romance revived; and in the nineteenth century the revival was sometimes combined with

a deliberately reactionary purpose. But, from the purely æsthetic point of view, it is clear that the Middle Ages were especially adapted to the kind of reminiscent sentiment called romantic. They contained elements of a more archaic order. These had for modern Europe something like the effect of the less-known old heroic legends, when newly revived in late Græco-Roman antiquity. For, of course, it is not the local and temporal character of the subject-matter that has the romantic effect. What we call by convention "classical" matter can be treated in a romantic manner. For this a condition seems to be that consciously superseded elements should have the writer's and the reader's sympathies. In this sense Swinburne's *Hymn to Proserpine* is a romantic poem, while *The Last Oracle*, turning away from a dead past with joy and returning to that which is both old and new because it is eternal, is not.

There are other shades of meaning connected with the word "romance"; but this seems to be that which it conveys æsthetically. Thus the half-known mediæval world has had a characteristically "romantic" fascination. The literary search for what Bacon called the element of "strangeness" in beauty has thrown itself especially on that world. As it never was a world of clear daylight, its charm for the curious will no doubt remain.

To return from this digression, it may be said, with or without irony, that there is nothing "romantic" in the representative institutions that emerged in the Middle Age. They constitute, in fact, the one great political invention, with no backward reference, since the rise of the city-State on the shores of the Mediterranean. Inventions of this kind proceed from no assignable person, and are not finally explicable. All we can do is to classify them as social "variations," analogous to the organic

variations on which the rise of new species depends. First appearing clearly as a new thing in the very depth of the monarchico-theocratic period, the principle of representation was destined to bring back the classical type of polity on an enlarged scale. By the method of electing deputies to an assembly, which thus came to stand for a whole people, and by that alone, the modern free national State began to exist.

The absence of this principle had made the continuance of the ancient republican type impossible. The Greeks had brought the autonomous city, as a political unit, to such finished form within its own limits that it could neither incorporate itself in, nor incorporate with itself, a larger community. This was seen especially in the case of Athens. When an alliance was formed with minor cities to keep the defeated Asiatic Empire within its bounds, this passed into a rule of Athens over the others. The allies became tributaries. The free development of Athens as an autonomous State would, in fact, have been restricted by a real federation in which other States had a voice of their own. Hence the solution by federalism—the only development then possible on strictly republican lines—was never seriously attempted. What was formed was a kind of empire. As this was an empire over nominal equals, each subject-city, however mildly governed, felt itself deprived of the autonomy to which, as Greek cities, none could resign their claim. The Athenians, too, seem to have felt that, whatever great ends might be attained by it, their system was not quite compatible with justice as they themselves conceived it. Yet, at the same time, they held firmly the conviction that it was something better than the world had hitherto known. In fact, they had succeeded in the highest political aim—the construction of a polity free within itself—but had been unable to evolve a method of extend-

ing it. The imperial solution actually adopted failed; but this, after all, was a failure in a secondary problem. Before a type can either impose itself or diffuse its influence it must first exist. The Athenians had solved for themselves the problem of liberty; excluding, as their great tragic poet said, anarchy on the one side and despotism on the other. They had failed to show by example how the solution could be generalised; or, in default of this, to hold together and extend an empire in the Greek world.

The most important result of the Athenian Empire was the undesigned effect which can be inferred from Thucydides.[1] It was due to the political dominance of Athens, though this was only temporary, that Attic prose became the medium of educated intercourse throughout the Greek-speaking world.

This provokes general reflections on military conquest or constraint, in the older civilised societies of men, as the "occasional cause" of every extensive culture. All the best minds at Athens (not least Thucydides himself) had scruples about the rightfulness of empire. The same scruples appeared, though less frequently, among the Romans. Yet in both cases the same kind of justification has since become manifest. Not only did the Latin language, diffused by empire in the West, become the basis of European culture, but, we may now add, without Cæsar's conquest of Gaul and the conquest of England by the Latinised Normans, the French and the modern English languages would not have existed.

Such facts may be used to support the optimistic view of Hegel and of Comte, that the world-spirit, or the "human providence," makes use of the men of action as instruments for its own ends. Nevertheless, we must

[1] The passage I have in view is vii, 63, 3.

agree with Comte that as a mode of progress conquest is now obsolete. In any particular society it becomes obsolete from the time when ethical reflection turns against it. At Athens the turn came with the poets (here Euripides and Aristophanes are at one), with the profoundly ethical Thucydides, and with the philosophers who followed Socrates.

The collapse of the Athenian Empire did not restore the independence of the minor States, as jealous rivals had promised. The first result of the decisive defeat of Athens was the return of Persia and Carthage to the sphere from which they had been driven. Within the Greek world, the harsher empire of Sparta, now substituted for that of Athens, went down in its turn, and the East became relatively still stronger. The re-descent of the West to a lower level could be seen setting in. Great results of a kind were still to be attained, and Athenian ideas were to be diffused in many indirect ways; but, had it not been for the rise of a new republican polity in Italy, the return of Asiatic monarchy would have been earlier and more complete.

For the Macedonian monarchic empires, resulting from the statecraft of Philip and the military genius of Alexander, rapidly became Oriental in type. Their starting-point was, indeed, a national monarchy that might, under other conditions, have anticipated the modern development by passing into a constitutional State; but the early acquisition of an empire was fatal to this possibility. The effect of the Macedonian overlordship in Greece itself was to reduce the autonomous city to the rank of a municipality. In the East the king assumed the character of a divine incarnation. He took over officially the attributes of the ancient Oriental kings, and scrupulously respected the old organisation of religion. At the same time "Hellenism," in the form of

literary and scientific culture, was diffused. The idea of its diffusion had, indeed, already become current in Greece. Isocrates observed that the name of "Greek" now indicated a type of education rather than membership of a race; and, though not a mind of the highest originality, he displayed true prescience in looking to the Macedonian monarchy as the means of spreading Hellenism. Thus there were very plausible grounds, now as later, for acquiescing in monarchy. It gave comparative peace, and probably to the average individual as much freedom as he desired; and under it there was not less care than before for culture.

The vocation of the Greeks in practical politics had, in fact, been fulfilled. Between the Macedonian and the Roman periods there was, indeed, an attempt at federalism by some of the smaller Greek communities. Within this, slight trials were made of representative methods, as afterwards, quite in a subordinate way, by the astute Augustus; but nothing important came of them. This whole movement was merely a phase of transition; as, indeed, it seems to me that federalism must be always. The instinct was sound by which the Greeks, in their period of greatness aud intense effort, rejected this as incompatible with the completest unfolding of the life of the city. The end of a federation must be either to consolidate into a fully unified State or to break up into separate units. As an intermediate stage it may, like an empire, have a certain relative value; but for the accomplished type of the State we must look not, indeed, again to the city, but in the end to some individualised unity.

The relative value of a transitional federalism is seen in the case of Rome, which, though a city-State, had a less finished form than the autonomous cities of Greece. This, as is known, was due to some remains of an early federation of its constituent elements. The result was

the possibility of incorporating subjects on terms nearer equality. Hence there could be formed by degrees an empire that was not a mere system of domination. To the growth of this there were other aids as important as military aptitude. While the origins of Roman law were much like the origins of law in the Greek cities, the Romans had more persistence in the elaboration of legal ideas. Thus one of the instruments by which political freedom is to be realised had greater efficacy. For the elaboration of law, the gradual extension of dominion, with incorporation of former subjects as members of the State, furnished the conditions. As Greek culture was adopted, the ideas of Greek philosophy, so far as they could be turned to legal account, influenced the jurists. The Roman aristocracy was, as Comte has remarked, more anti-theocratic than a Greek democracy, and under its rule intellectual liberty was more secure. Here the passage to monarchy, on the whole, made no change. The occasional proceedings against philosophers of republican sympathies under the early Empire were quite episodical, and left no trace on the imperial policy. Even in relation to practical freedom the republican past had in some respects fixed itself permanently in institutions. While the individual citizen as such lost all share, even apparent, in governing the State, he had a recognised right to a certain equality of treatment. The distinctive idea of justice, as it has since been understood in Europe, was preserved, and to some extent developed, in the legal system of the Empire.

The Roman dominion in the eastern provinces resembled the British dominion in India. The system did not permit further political growth from within; but on the old social strata was superimposed the result, in the form of law, of a process that could have gone on at first only in politically free communities. The difference may perhaps

be this: that in the Roman Empire, as the centre ceased to be vital, the subject-communities could not be trained to self-government; whereas in the British Empire, with a self-governing State as the directing power, this training is possible if there is goodwill on both sides. From an ideal point of view, empire is in no case final. Instead of furnishing a solution of the problem of internal development, it lives on the results of development already achieved.

Before passing into a monarchy, the Roman Republic had changed from an aristocracy into a formal democracy. Yet, during this phase, the government always remained in reality oligarchic. The analogy is not with the Athenian democracy, but rather with the English as it remained for a long time. There was a system of popular election, and "new men" could from time to time gain admission into the circle of governing families; but these, as a body, remained the ruling class. At the end of the republican period, the aristocracy, it is recognised on all sides, had become corrupted by capitalism. While the sympathy of literature was still on the side of political liberty, this was seen on the whole as clearly as it has been during the latest phase of reaction. No really new insight was reserved for the modern Cæsarists. All that they could do was to find in the causes that made the overthrow of the republic possible its moral justification also. The necessity of tyranny became the tyrant's excuse. Yet, if carefully examined, a Cæsarist like Mommsen, not entirely without liberal sympathies, may be seen to make remarkable admissions—as, for example, that the best elements in Italy were against the new monarchy. Had Cæsar, instead of being the greatest of political "realists," been an idealist like Pericles, it is conceivable that he might have reformed the State on lines anticipating the attempt at a constitutional empire in the second century. Clearly,

however, unless the biographic tradition is totally wrong, he was a man to whom monarchic power was an end. His methods were those of a Greek despot—to start as democratic leader, to gain sufficient military strength, and then to overthrow the republic by arms, suppressing opinion so far as was necessary. All the ethical feeling of antiquity, it has been said before, remained on the side of the republican party. Cæsar himself, as his most eminent panegyrist admits, showed his feeling of this by writing his famous, but lost, *Anticatones* after the death of Cato.[1] The philosophers took Cato, not Cæsar, as their ideal; though admitting at last with regret that want of sufficient virtue in the State had made monarchy inevitable. Virgil, as a philosophic poet, followed, combining with his official glorification of the victory of Augustus at Actium the representation of Cato as giving laws to the pious shades.[2] The senatorial party for a time kept up a resistance, fortifying itself by the Stoic philosophy. Coming into power after the death of Domitian, it succeeded in modifying the conception of government. The ideal now set up was that of a monarchy whose end was liberty. Philosophic emperors, like Marcus Aurelius and afterwards Julian, themselves belonged to this direction of thought. Marcus Aurelius recalls for honour, not the founder of the monarchy, but his leading opponent and the chief of the conspiracy

[1] See Mommsen, *History of Rome*, bk. v, chap. x. While describing Cato as a "tragic fool," Mommsen nevertheless adds: "He too died not in vain. It was a fearfully striking protest of the republic against the monarchy, that the last republican went as the first monarch came—a protest which tore in sunder like gossamer all that so-called constitutional character with which Cæsar invested his monarchy, and exposed in all its hypocritical falsehood the shibboleth of the reconciliation of all parties, under the aegis of which despotism grew up" (Eng. trans. in "Everyman's Library," vol. iv, pp. 422–3).

[2] *Aen.* viii, 670. This explains the place given by Dante to Cato.

against him. Julian writes a satire on the Cæsars, in which, however, Augustus is represented as having the grace to be rather ashamed of his own apotheosis. But, of course, the drift to absolute monarchy was persistent; the efforts of idealists, even on the throne, could only check the decline. Slavery and capitalism within, and the incorporation of multitudes that knew and understood only the rule of a despot, were necessarily fatal to the small communities of freemen that had risen on the outskirts of a civilisation controlled for ages past by hierarchs and half-divine kings. To the Greeks themselves, at the height of their republican enthusiasm, this type, seen from a distance, had still something of the glamour that surrounded the god-descended rulers of their own heroic period.

The reformed Empire, philosophically directed, went on in theory long after the Antonines. The desire to attach themselves to the tradition of which Marcus had become the most illustrious representative was indicated by the adoption of the name "Antoninus" by later emperors. To fix the consecrated military absolutism of Oriental type by which the Roman basis of "Senate and People" was at length displaced, there was needed a new hierarchic religion. This brought with it the substitution of the "labarum," with its cross and crown, for the old standard that had come down from the republic. The religion adopted, as we are often told by apologists for its supernatural claims, was that which at first appeared most hostile to the order of the Roman State. One reason for its thus appearing is that its first emergence as a recognisable phenomenon was in the second century of our era, precisely at the time when the old republican ideal had been revived among the governing classes. Christianity was in reality the finally successful form taken by a propaganda that had long been going on from Asia. On

this the statesmen of the West had always kept a suspicious eye. Societies organised by foreign mystagogues, resting on a secret cult and a doctrine regarded as revealed, obviously threatened the formation of a State within the State. And of all societies of this type the "Catholic Church," with its unconcealed claim to universal dominance and its systematic attack on the old civic and national religions, must have appeared the most dangerous. To regard it as fundamentally "democratic," and opposed for that reason by the higher classes, is a complete error. The Platonic philosopher Celsus, who wrote against the Christians under Marcus Aurelius, is distinctly more democratic in tone than Origen, who replied to him two generations later. In Origen we may see already the aristocracy of the priest. The theory of the Christian Empire held by ecclesiastics was that which was long afterwards formulated by Joseph de Maistre. There can be no check on monarchy "from below," but only "from above"—that is, from the representatives of revealed religion.

The authority of these, we know, was for ages to be superimposed on the new military aristocracy that sprang up after the disruption of the Western Empire. Kings and nobles were to lend their swords to propagate unity "in Christ," now supreme in theory, as the unity of the human race had been for the closing epoch of paganism. Of course, paganism had not realised "liberty, equality, and fraternity," though aspirations towards all of them, and not merely the first, had been uttered by the nobler minds. But still less did dominant Christianity realise them.

Though Christianity offered its aid to growing absolutism, and was at length adopted by a successful soldier who became emperor, the schism in the Empire still continued in a latent state. What remained of Roman

patriotism was associated with the old civic cult. The philosophic schools stood out to the last against the doctrine of the Church. The Senate and its spokesmen in the imperial service pleaded for tolerance. If, however, the emperors were inclined to this, the high ecclesiastics insisted on a policy of persecution. All resistance, whether of Christian heretics or of the heathen populace or of philosophers, was crushed in the interests of the "Catholic faith"; and the newly-consecrated despotism, though losing ground, went on for centuries in the East. In the West, notwithstanding the new unification, it could not retain a pretence of coherence for two. The Teutonic invaders who overthrew it nevertheless accepted its religion. For the religion of the Roman decadence presented itself as that of the civilised world. And kings aiming at absolutism, provided they were "orthodox," could rely on the support of the clergy. "Recalcitrant elements" were brought under the yoke by massacre. With the religion, however propagated, the new races entered on the inheritance of the old culture, which was still the basis of all the liberal education that remained. From their native seats they had brought traditions of freedom. With these there went a peculiar loyalty to personal chiefs, not to the idea of the State, as with the races of classical antiquity. In the stage they had reached socially they were, when first known, more primitive than the Homeric Greeks. Hence an endless mixture of elements, some of which have already been remarked on. Into this tangle we need not enter again. We may take a leap forward to the first coherent and successful new beginnings of a political freedom consistent with civilisation.

For some time, the force that promoted renascent culture was that of new-formed monarchy. A largely conceived attempt was made in the West to revive the

Empire as a controlling power over national kings, but this never counted as much more than an ideal. The new type of civilisation to be evolved depended essentially on the independent nationalities that were growing up in the time of confusion that followed the wreck of the old Western Empire. The unification of these within themselves depended on a strong central monarchy; but this met with resistance from the feudal aristocracy of chiefs with vassals bound to them by the tie of personal loyalty. Thus feudalism, on one side a graduated system of subjection, had also a side on which it represented freedom. This freedom, however, tended to anarchy; and naturally, under the conditions, to an oppressive anarchy. The feudal noble might strive for independence of the king only to establish an unrestricted tyranny in his own domain. The king, by putting himself on the side of the commonalty against the nobles, could usually in the long run gain the supremacy over both. In the meantime, peace and security of life were promoted. On the Continent this was the normal process. Coincidently, therefore, with the revival of culture, a new impulse was given to absolutism. What checked this process, and at length reversed it, was mainly the exceptional course of things in England.

While allowing much for circumstances, such as the comparatively early unification brought about by the Norman Conquest, and the greater liberty to make experiments given by the insular position of England, we may still claim something for national character. This is allowed by Continental historians. Eduard Meyer, for example,[1] points out that the relative success of Athens and of England in finding a way out of a political crisis

[1] In his great *History of Antiquity*; not in an ill-considered book on England which he wrote during the War.

is due to a certain moderation of temper common to all classes. In virtue of this, political factions have not assumed the extreme ferocity that has been seen in some other States, both ancient and modern. There is something of "give and take"; no class stands out to the last for privilege on the one side or revolution on the other; and this is not due to want of spirit, but to an element of fairness. Thus in England in the thirteenth century, when the first groundwork of the national character had been laid, nobles and commons could combine to restrict the royal power.

This is quite rightly regarded as the new birth of European freedom. To make light of Magna Charta from some present-day point of view is a pseudo-democratic fallacy. Because the aristocracy was careful to maintain first its own privileges against the king, it does not follow that even slight concessions to popular claims were of no value. We cannot expect a general declaration of the rights of man in 1215, nor even much later. The mere verbal recognition that in some respects all freemen were to be treated alike was an immense gain. And, whether it is political or intellectual liberty that is in question, the freedom of a few is better than the freedom of none. The end, of course, is not, in either case, that there should be a small body of freemen, with the mass of the community in civil or spiritual servitude; but this, as a temporary state, is better than universal bondage. The real and serious importance of Magna Charta for the history of freedom is sufficiently proved by the measures taken by Innocent III, the strongest and clearest brain that ever wielded the Kingdom of Darkness, in condemning it and excommunicating the barons who had exacted it from the tyrant.

For the purpose of a general view it is not necessary to follow out in detail the process by which, from the

thirteenth century onward, the Commons in Parliament gradually made their power felt in the State. The exigencies of the kings from time to time brought them to develop constitutionalism. Sometimes the paramount need of putting an end to feudal anarchy led to a kind of temporary absolutism with popular support. Parliamentary institutions, in the meantime, were not suppressed. Thus they could spring into active life again as soon as a serious attempt was made to establish an absolute monarchy on principle. The decisive contest was postponed to the seventeenth century. In the end the result was a compromise. The constitution adopted was a "limited monarchy," already formulated in the fifteenth century as the English type. The effective government during most of the eighteenth century was by the aristocracy. Hence England in that period was classified by Continental observers, not as properly a monarchy (for the type of this on the Continent had now become absolutism), but as an "aristocratic republic." With temporary revivals of monarchical sentiment, the drift since then has been to a more adequate expression of representative democracy, though the constitution still remains mixed. The result of the whole movement is that, through the slowly evolved device of choosing deputies, a self-governing nation is now as clearly defined a political unity as a self-governing city was in antiquity.

In England itself the new republican polity may be said to have remained implicit. Royalist forms are still used in the machinery of government. In America and France the type of the explicit republic has been reached. Towards both of these developments English ideas essentially contributed, though they did not act alone. To understand their beginnings we must go back for a moment, and indicate the factors that combined, in the

transition to modern Europe, to revive political freedom, not simply as a fact, but as an ideal.

Of course, it was not in England alone that endeavours had been made to preserve freedom in the Middle Ages; but at the beginning of the seventeenth century it appeared as if, with the newly-acquired stability of the State, absolutism was to triumph everywhere. In England itself great men regarded the obstacles in its way as relics of a more or less barbaric past. The best thing, in their opinion, was that a monarch, concentrating the sovereign power in himself, should choose intelligent servants to administer the affairs of the nation for the public good. This was the conviction of Bacon, as it was afterwards of Hobbes. Here, however, the national genius, or whatever we like to call it, was better inspired than the highest individual genius, at least of a philosophic kind. Neither popular nor aristocratic feeling was really in favour of absolute monarchy. There was among the gentry a diffused admiration—testified to by Hobbes—for the republican polities of antiquity. Again, the Jewish and Christian Scriptures, which had now become, through the Reformation, the most powerful element in general culture, seemed to point to a theocracy different in kind from a tyranny of prelates centring in a king by divine right. The view, indeed, is held that Josephus, who invented the term to describe for Greek and Roman readers the polity of the Jews, had in mind an ideal of Puritan theocracy, and not a system of social direction by priests. To this last the term has come to be applied perhaps most frequently. Thus it has become an equivalent of the more scientific term "hierocracy." The Puritan theocratic ideal, although when it attains power it tends to coincide with the hierocratic form, means something different. It is primarily hostile to a hierarchy, social or spiritual; claiming as it does for each

individual believer in the true religion direct inspiration from God. When confronted with a State or Church that gives out commands against the individual conscience it becomes a principle of insurgence. Hence some have taken it to be the primal source of modern political liberty. This, indeed, is going too far. Its part in the struggle for freedom was mainly that of an emotional revolt. It suggested no workable form of institutions by which freedom could be preserved. Still it must count, along with the attraction exercised by classical republicanism, as an element in the movement.[1] Without the preservation and development of old Teutonic institutions, however, Scripturalism and Classicism together would probably have failed to check the reduction of the whole West under a neo-Latin absolutism. All the forces united were not too much; but the essential thing was that native elements, at once vital and formative, were there, and wanted only stimulation to bring about a new growth.

After the decision of the contest in England the principal factors for the rest of Europe were the English constitutional development itself and the political and legal ideas of antiquity, which, among theorists, had been active all along. In the eighteenth century insurgent theocracy practically ceased to count. The extension with logical precision given by French thinkers to claims first upheld as privileges inherited by the natives of a particular country has been made a ground both of praise and of blame to the French mind. No doubt there was in all this something that depended on a

[1] If there are any who refuse to recognise the services of Puritanism in politics because of its hostility to art, I can quote a very impartial authority in mitigation of judgment: "The opposition of the reform to art has been often enlarged upon; far greater was that of the catholic revival" (Pater, *Studies in the History of the Renaissance*, 1st ed., p. 80).

special aptitude for logic and clearness; but the intellectual modification was, on the whole, that which belongs necessarily to any progressive transformation of ideas in a new social medium. Accidental complexities are lost while the essence is preserved. Thus, if the ideas are vital, they put forth new power. Cases might be shown in which Englishmen have simplified and logically developed the discoveries of Frenchmen. If any blame is due, it is certainly not to those who carry further either speculative or practical ideas, but to those who let them sink into mere tradition. That this was not the fate of English ideas in politics was due, so far as theory was concerned, mainly to French thinkers; and, in practice, first to the American War of Independence and then to the French Revolution. Since those events it has become clearer and clearer that the notion of the Republic in the generalised sense is bounded by no limits of nationality whatever.

The type of the self-governing national State having been determined, the question arises whether any form of polity transcending this can be perceived in process of growth. To answer rightly this question, which has become a practically important one since the War, a distinction is necessary. As I said formerly, I do not perceive either in an empire or in a federation a higher unity. I do not believe in a super-State going on by progressive aggrandisement to be a world-State. The problem of preventing further wars, however, has made it of the utmost importance to determine what kind of relation States should bear to one another. Here the problem seems to be essentially to discover or to make use of modes of organisation that allow the greatest practicable autonomy of the parts. The case with a federal State is ambiguous. Are individual freedom and flexibility of national development best promoted by

retaining the federal form, or by a breaking up into separate States, or by becoming a unitary State? This seems to depend very much on empirical elements in the problems, which I do not propose to discuss. On Empire I limit myself as before to the British Empire; and I find that I have nothing to say beyond what is now commonly admitted. The greatest merit of the British Empire, whether the term is applied to the union with the Colonies or to the different type of the Government of India, is that it looks in the direction of greater autonomy for its constituent parts, and not in the direction of a more stringent bond, federal or other. Thus it is quite truly described as the freest form ever taken by any organisation calling itself an Empire. But, simply as a matter of classification, the unity of the whole is less organic than the unity, say, of any one of the self-governing Commonwealths that comprise the Dominions. In the case of a League, as distinguished from an Empire or a Federation, the unity must naturally be still looser. Consequently, what we ought to look forward to is not a strictly political union of the whole world at all, but an enlargement of the range of international law or ethics. This must come from the extension of ethical precepts already recognised within the State. If, as is to be hoped, the League of Nations grows in power, it will be by the force of opinion, not from the effort to become a super-State ruling the nations by force of arms.

The ideal therefore remains a system of free national States, each developing within itself, and all in contact with the rest for purposes of culture, but none aspiring to universal dominion. Each will do well to cultivate its own patriotism, without either disdaining the rest or looking towards cosmopolitan fusion. The nationalities at the basis of the traditional cultures are of course products of history and not things to be carved out by

any philosophy, positive or other. Above all States, indeed, there is Humanity; but those who are permeated with the ideal of freedom will conceive of future Humanity as kingless and priestless, not concentrated in a new hierarchy and a sovereign pontiff:—

> Man, one harmonious soul of many a soul,
> Whose nature is its own divine control.

Chapter IV

POLITICAL CONSTITUTION

Provisionally, we may assume that within the State the ground-principle must be legal equality, the principle of discrimination personal merit. How does this affect the existing political order generally, and more especially that of our own country?

It might seem to exclude from the first all heredity of functions recognised by law. A brief discussion may, nevertheless, be devoted to the portions of the constitution in which this heredity has hitherto maintained itself.

First, then, is the ideal constitution necessarily an explicit republic, or may there be a titular monarch? The form of State that is now republican only implicitly, it might be argued, can rank among the permanent forms provided the hereditary king is made ostensibly as well as really the appointed centre of the State, deriving the right to his position from the State itself, and not from an order of ideas inconsistent with any genuine republican ethics. The notion, for example, that there is a supreme duty of obedience to the command of another person, whose position has been fixed in advance, belongs wholly to the ethical system that has already been rejected. Command and obedience may exist in an ideal order, but they must be capable of general deduction from rational principles. The point is not that every particular command, whether of the law or of a person, should be examined before it is acted on. This would be obviously absurd in the relation between parents and children, and

impracticable in some other social relations, such as that of a military subordinate to his superior officer. All that is meant is that, to any rational inquirer, it should be possible to show the necessity of command and obedience in these cases by deduction from the nature of the order to which it belongs. Reason must be finally the judge. Obedience without examination can take only a minor place within a system of which the supreme principle is rational devotion to a common good. That form of monarchy which makes it a paramount duty to obey a person raised above the rest intrinsically or by divine decree is thus necessarily excluded. Can European monarchy in any form be upheld permanently on these principles?

Something may be fairly said on behalf of it. Where there is no hereditary monarchy, while for the rest there is a parliamentary system like that of England, with a Prime Minister at its head who is the leader of a party, a President above parties is still needed as a formal centre. Again, under a system in which the President is practically elected, not by a parliamentary choice express or implied, but by a direct popular vote, he has something more of monarchic power than most European monarchs; and yet this power definitely depends on the general will. Why should not the general will fix the hereditary form of presidency as the most convenient? Historically, it may be further contended on behalf of European monarchy (so far as it is of the constitutional type), this mode of kingship arose as a limited rule of chiefs over freemen. Thus it was the real beginning of the republican polity. And it has long served as a rallying-point to enable national patriotism to rise above local and particular loyalties. May it not still furnish an imaginative aid to the more abstract sentiment of devotion to the State? Of course, where it has gone, no one imbued with the

republican ideal would think of restoring it; but where it exists ought we not to desire that it should remain?

If such questions were rather "academical" before the War, they are now still more so; but, as I am dealing with political philosophy, and not directly with practical politics, a brief discussion of them seems necessary. My own opinion is that, when a certain degree of rationality is attained by the general mind, hereditary monarchy must give place to the explicitly republican form; but that, where a constitutional monarchy exists, there is no need to hurry the transition. In particular cases there may even be reasons for retarding it. Possibilities may be visible of change for the worse. The present English system, for example, preserves for us a constitution having far more in common with the parliamentary and unitary republic of France than with the federal republic of the United States and its direct popular election of the President;[1] and this makes it, in effect, a more republican and less monarchical constitution. And it is easy to see that our monarchy is still on a line of peaceful progress unlike that of the old French monarchy, which ended in revolution. A great French historian has given us credit for carrying the use of legal fictions, even in the Middle Ages, to a point beyond that which was reached by the genius of the Romans.[2] And these "fictions," in relation to the monarchy, are not really deceptive, but merely indicate a sense of historical continuity. It is true that a Court may seem the natural centre of a most irrationally complex social hierarchy, far remote from the simplicity of a classical republic; but

[1] The founders of the Constitution did not intend that the election should be direct, but it has become so in practice. The French President is elected by the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies.

[2] Michelet, *Histoire de France*, vol. vi, p. 3, n. 2: "Les Anglais ont porté dans le droit politique ce génie de fiction que les Romains n'ont montré que dans le droit civil."

probably the social drift has now set in permanently for simplification. It will certainly not be constitutional princes themselves who will go the way of Louis XIV in multiplying ceremonial.[1]

The question about the constitution and powers of the House of Lords may seem more practical; but here I think that, in a liberal interest, we shall do well for the present to resist the "reformers." In a monarchy the hereditary character of the House of Lords cannot be objected to in principle. To regard hereditary monarchy as sacrosanct and hereditary nobility as absurd, however it may appeal to some who think themselves democrats, is ultra-royalist superstition. Historically, even more can be said with justice for the English aristocracy than for the monarchy. While the monarchy held the State together, the aristocracy prevented the loss of liberty without destroying the unification achieved. In the Middle Ages the barons sought the aid of the people to limit the royal power; and in the seventeenth century the resistance to absolutism was brought to a successful close by aristocratic leaders. Still, it may be said, this belongs to the past. In the present world is a second chamber necessary at all? Is not the representative chamber sufficient? From the point of view of a Greek democracy, it already contains an "aristocratic" element. Its members are chosen by election and not by lot, and therefore tend to be distinguished in some way above the

[1] There is an interesting passage of Balzac on this subject, which shows something of the range of the great novelist's reading: "Un peu relâchée sous les deux premiers rois de la maison de Bourbon, l'étiquette prit une forme orientale sous le grand roi, car elle est venue du Bas-Empire qui la tenait de la Perse" (*Sur Catherine de Médicis, II*). This is very exact. A Byzantine scholiast on Æschylus has observed the resemblance between the titles of the Great King's officials as cited in the *Persians* and those of the functionaries in the Empire under which he lived. We see how the title itself of Great King has travelled westwards.

mass of their constituents. This is a necessary consequence of the organisation of democracy in a modern national State, since a meeting of the whole body of citizens is physically impossible. No parliament can be a "public meeting" in the sense in which the Athenian Assembly was. Will not the House of Commons, then, being in this sense of aristocratic constitution yet representative of the whole people, suffice as the sovereign power in the State?

Modern experience seems to be against this. In the most advanced democracies some kind of senatorial element has had to be introduced. Considered rationally, it seems to be needed at once for keeping back ill-considered innovations and for checking reaction. There is danger, however, in giving too much power to a second chamber. It cannot be allowed to hold up indefinitely measures on which the general sense of the community has decided. Now, the House of Lords under the Parliament Act of 1911 seems to have exactly the right degree of power for a second chamber. A measure which has survived all modern parliamentary methods of delay and resistance for two years ought clearly to pass into law. And I think the conclusion of calm reason must be that at present we are not likely to get a better second chamber than the existing one. It consists of educated men who are relatively men of leisure; its experts, who usually lead, are experts in law and politics, which are humanist studies; and conceivably it might stand in the way of our subjection to what Comte, borrowing a term invented by Mill, called a "pedantocracy."

Even in the most complete formal Republic, as political theorists have already shown, we arrive at a system still containing all the elements of the "mixed government" from which Western communities set out. The electorate is the democratic element; the representatives,

at one or more removes, are an aristocratic element; and there is a monarchical element in the fact that finally the decision as to the action to be taken rests with a single person, the Prime Minister or the President. What has disappeared at the extreme limit is only the heredity of functions.

To complete the outline, one or two questions about the electorate and the mechanism of elections must be discussed, however slightly. In the first edition I defended the claim to political equality of the sexes which descends from Plato's *Republic*[1] to Mill's *Subjection of Women*. The claim seemed to me to be, in the long run, one of justice. What effect it will have on the ends to be attained, now that it has been conceded, no one can yet say. To make the concession complete, it has been demanded further that the vote, instead of being given to men at twenty-one and to women at thirty, should be given to both sexes impartially at twenty-one. A compromise proposed, that all should be entitled to the franchise equally at twenty-five, seems to moderate democrats preferable; and perhaps later on Mill's suggestion that some slight educational test should be imposed may become practicable. At the same time the paradox might be accepted that either a man or a woman should be eligible for Parliament at twenty-one. There are rare cases where political genius develops early, and there is no ground for saying that it cannot develop in either sex.

The next point to be discussed is the contested one of Proportional Representation. Here I still retain my hostile opinion. The system is advocated on the ground that it would give a more exact picture of the state of opinion in the electorate. If this were the primary aim

[1] In the *Laws* Plato retracts no opinion of his on this subject, but everywhere retains the equality of women as far as it is compatible with the difference of institutions in his second-best State.

of a representative assembly, the argument would be conclusive. Nothing could then be more absurd than the immense over-representation of the party that is for the time being in the majority. If, however, the end of parliamentary government is effective State-action in accordance with the general mind, then it seems to me that proportional representation must be rejected. The more diffused ability to take part in detailed political discussion has brought with it increased facilities for the checking of legislation by parliamentary minorities. Now, in the present system, where each town or district sends a member representing the local majority, the great numerical preponderance given to what may be a relatively small majority all over the country partly counteracts this weakness of democratic government. That one of the parties is in the majority—that its policy has received the assent of the constituencies—is made plainly visible. Obstruction to new legislation can be denounced with popular effect as an attempt to thwart the declared will of the country. This, therefore, has a better chance of being carried out. What is needed for action is an artificial simplification of political issues and divisions of opinion, not the reproduction of these in the House of Commons in all their complexity. The object of the representative system, in short, is to give us a working government, not an ideal debating society.

Another device which those who desire effective State-action will reject, on reflection, is the referendum. This exists in some modern democracies, and it has been proposed to introduce it into England. Let any sufficiently large group, under defined conditions, be able to call for a mass vote from the constituencies on the particular measure before Parliament. This, it is said, would be an appeal to the real "sovereign" behind all the constitutional mechanism. Thus it might be regarded as a

realisation of "direct democracy" under modern conditions. It could no longer be said that an ancient State was more democratic in the power of directly affirming its will than a modern State. I repeat the reply I made before: the constant possibility of an appeal of this kind would tell against an important though incidental good result of the representative system. In this, as has been pointed out, there is an element of "aristocracy" in the Platonic and Aristotelian sense. The average representative is, in intellect and training, superior to the bulk of his constituents. He is elected, so far as agreement of opinion determines his election, on certain broad questions. Details of legislation are necessarily, in some part, left to his judgment. Consequently many changes that commend themselves to intelligent minds, but arouse little emotion, can be silently carried through. If, however, a direct appeal to the country on such changes were rendered easy by a new mechanism, prejudices and wakeful "vested interests" would constantly see their opportunity, and would often succeed in playing on the latent popular feeling against change. Illustrations of the possibilities can easily be given. Suppose the referendum had been a portion of the British constitution in the middle of the eighteenth century: what would have been the chances of bringing the reformed calendar into use? And this may remind us of certain other historical facts. The great reform of the calendar in antiquity was due to the action of Julius Cæsar as dictator; and even he, at the height of his power, had to use the utmost circumspection in face of religious and popular conservatism. Again, the great reform of the Julian Calendar was due to a Pope of the Reaction, Gregory XIII, who, in virtue of his position, was able to impose it in Catholic Europe. The rulers of Protestant countries could have had no objection to adopting so reasonable a

measure, but they had to consider the prejudices of their subjects, to whom demonstrated science was nothing as compared with the fact that the reform had been introduced by a Pope. In England it was not until nearly two centuries later that the Gregorian Calendar was accepted; and then by a ruling oligarchy in the teeth of popular opposition. And any one who thinks that "universal education" has made a difference may be invited to consider the phenomenon of American Fundamentalism.

The kindred phenomenon of Prohibition may remind us that new bigotries can be as powerful as old ones. We are threatened in our own country with the same kind of thing in the permission it is proposed to give to localities to legislate for themselves in the forms called Local Option and Local Veto. Such devices are simply a means of setting democracy against liberty in the service of new fanaticisms. In a modern State the power of a strong central government, which declines to depute the right to legislate, except within very narrow limits, to classes or corporations or localities, is the bulwark of individual liberty. And liberty is the end for which the State exists and by which forms of government are to be ultimately judged.

Chapter V

SOCIAL ORDER

WHATEVER changes may be proposed in the political order, there is no State in Europe entitled in the most general sense to the name of liberal that is not in advance of the social, and in particular the economic, order over which it presides. For the form of the State, in the liberal nations, is the result of conscious efforts after freedom and justice, with the equality they suppose; whereas modern society combines with the surviving inequalities of feudalism the new inequalities of capitalist industrialism. Now, the Catholic-feudal order was a system of graduated command and obedience, founded on violence and consecrated by falsehood. At its best it was mitigated by consideration for inferiors on the one side, and by deference to superiors on the other. The effect of modern industrialism has been to preserve the form of the system and to destroy its mitigations, substituting for these a pure anarchy of self-interest. To this extent we must agree with the nineteenth-century prophets who have denounced it from the point of view of an idealised past. Where those prophets were wrong was in ascribing its evils to the modern political revolutions that had dethroned the old authorities, and were slowly dissipating the reverence for the hierarchy of fixed and inherited ranks. For, worse in some respects though the industrial anarchy may have been, we cannot find in the old order any true ideal of human relationships as they ought to be.

In reality it is the concentration of new wealth that has in great part nullified the beneficent effect of political changes. If differences of fortune had not been immensely increased through the possibilities thrown open by the application of science and invention to industry, the problem of the modern State would have been much less difficult and complex. Territorial privileges inherited from feudalism having been swept away, and no new great contrasts of wealth and poverty introduced, the system of free contract, with little State-interference to limit the kinds of contract permissible, would have been fairly workable as the basis of a liberal State. But the expectations of "individualist" Liberalism have been falsified by the advent of industrial plutocracy. The indirect advantage of this may have been, by the problems it has raised, to overthrow an inadequate conception of the State. That the State should take for its task simply to enforce contracts freely made between parties regarded as equal was undoubtedly an advance on the conception of it as machinery for supporting the splendour of a privileged order on the toil of a subjected mass. That it should be neutral with regard to speculative opinions was similarly an advance on the conception of it as the "secular arm" in relation to the self-styled "spiritual power," in the visible form of a corporation of persecuting hierarchs appealing to an invisible head whose will they claimed to know. Yet this was not the end. The end is to return to the classical conception of the State, according to which it exists to realise justice in every sense, and not merely in one simplified aspect. Thus conceived, it has itself a spiritual function, though it is best not to call it the "spiritual power." The true spiritual power is that of individual thought, of which the State secures the liberty.

According to this view, the chief practical problem

now is, under the influence of ideas, to modify by State-action the type of society which we have inherited, and the type of economic order that has been allowed to grow up at haphazard. Thus the field is thrown open for a system so radically different from the present order as Socialism. If this, in any of its forms, can be shown to be more rational, then the aim of the State ought to be to bring it into being. Even against revolutionary methods, certainly no tenderness or reverence for the old order could any longer stand in the way. So far as the social hierarchy under which we live is not merely endured as the result of impersonal forces, but rests on sentiment, that sentiment has become almost purely base. Higher sentiments of a social kind can and do exist, but they have reference to an ideal ethical and political order that is striving to be, or to that in the past which prepared for it. From the graded hierarchy of rank and wealth as it exists they are completely alienated.

Thus all feeling against Socialism from attachment to the present order may be set aside. The real arguments against it are, that in suppressing private property it would as a direct consequence suppress liberty, and that the type of order it involves is, after all, merely a new kind of industrial State. The difference of this from an industrial plutocracy would be, apart from the relative disappearance of inequality, all for the worse. For, being a more systematised industrialism, it would suppress the happy accidents through which culture is still promoted in a disinterested manner. In a society of which the principle is anarchical competition, no doubt the possibility of showing any other kind of power depends more and more on the possession of a basis of commercial or industrial faculty. Its ethical standard was formulated—perhaps with humorous intention—in an

epigram to the effect that every one ought to be able to become a philistine if need be. But our actual society contains elements of very various historical origin. And plutocracy, needing as it does for itself private property and inheritance, cannot propose to efface the accidental results of earlier stages of social existence. Hence, as things are, some are free to do disinterested work from the beginning. Social democracy, by its levelling principle, would submit all without exception to the industrial test. Its equality, too, in the long run, could not be absolute. Industrial directors would be needed; and these, however chosen, would form a hierarchy. Even were material rewards equalised, there would be grades of authority and power. It is true that, if the principle of specialising were admitted, some persons might be set apart to do work not directly industrial; but the conditions for this would be less free than in our present society. For the type of the theoretic life as it exists has been fixed by the man of leisure choosing to devote himself to pursuits for which he has a strong bent. This is the model even when the particular conditions are different. Under a system where all are paid servants of the State the model for everything must be the life of employment externally fixed. The ethical ideal in relation to other persons, according to Kant, is to treat them always as ends for themselves, and never as mere means. By the industrial socialistic State this ideal would be exactly reversed.

As may be seen, the arguments against Socialism from the points of view of culture and of freedom tend to coalesce. We may put the whole case briefly thus. The rulers in the State, according to the very principle of the system, would be its industrial directors; hence the ideals of the State would be more, and not less, stringently commercial than they are now. The individual would be

rigorously a portion of the industrial mechanism. His essence would be conceived as efficiency of function in relation to this.

What, then, becomes of equality if we reject Socialism? The reply is that we must modify the cruder ideal of equality. With Aristotle, we must say that in some respects human beings are entitled to be treated all alike; in some respects there ought to be difference of treatment. "Democratic" must be qualified with "aristocratic" justice. This means that differences of personal merit must be recognised as the ground for proportionate differences of treatment within certain limits. For Plato and Aristotle, this was in theory the meaning of aristocracy. Differences of treatment according to inherited rank or wealth they called "oligarchic." Aristotle, it is true, did not himself recognise that all men whatever ought to be treated alike as not reducible to slavery; but this does not affect the theoretical soundness of his position about justice, which was generalised from relations among freemen. It is important to note that the same general position is recognised in the French Declarations of Rights of 1789 and 1793, where discrimination according to "virtues and talents" is laid down as the principle of selection for public employments.

Some socialistic thinkers may, on metaphysical grounds express or implied, object wholly to this. There is, in reality, they may say, no such thing as personal merit, or none that is ascertainable. The acquirements called virtues, whether moral or intellectual, depend on inherited dispositions; and these are an affair of fortune as much as inherited wealth. The position, indeed, is oftener applied in the other direction. The criminal, for example, is declared to be a victim of heredity or bad surroundings, as in some sense he may be. But, of course, logic requires the application equally in both directions. If there is to

be no blame, there must also, as Aristotle said, be no praise. The general doctrine, though often held by materialists, seems to imply the hypothesis of a colourless soul, alike in all individuals, the victim of fate in one case, and the recipient of a kind of "grace" in others. Or, again, from a different point of view, it may be said that there is personal merit, but that for fellow-men it is unknowable. It is, ultimately, always moral; and it depends on an act of undetermined freewill, overcoming the nature or circumstances of the agent. No one can judge of this but the agent himself; or perhaps not even he. Hence—from either of these points of view—the State or human justice must regard no one as really entitled either to blame or praise, but must distribute pleasure and pain benevolently, so as to make all as happy as their circumstances or individual nature will permit. If there is any difference, more care ought to be devoted to the bad and the stupid, because they are unfortunate, and need more painstaking to prevent their falling too far below the average level.

A doctrine of this kind has furnished the theoretical basis for much practical argument by social reformers. Whatever we may think of it in the last resort, it stands for some elements of empirical value. Metaphysically, the extreme inferences could be escaped by supposing intrinsic differences in souls. Actions and acquirements thus go back, not wholly to something extrinsic, but in part to a difference that is the basis of personality. And a personality cannot be treated as the victim of itself. Ultimately infrangible, it may have its development promoted or thwarted by modes of social hygiene or education, but it is not purely and simply a product of heredity combined with environment, though for its manifestation it depends on these. In any case, for society or the State no question arises of determining merit

or demerit in relation to the universe. This conceded, it seems reasonable, on the whole, that general opinion, without explicit theory on the final question, should, from a common-sense point of view, recognise personal merit in the ordinary human sense, which implies no ultimate judgment. And, in this sense, both moral and intellectual virtues may be distinguished from what are obviously gifts of fortune as being removable from the person.

But this kind of fortune, too, it must be allowed, cannot be wholly eliminated in a state of equality such as is compatible with liberty. Equality thus understood means, primarily, legal equality. There are to be no privileged classes. Any person, in so far as contracting with any other, is to be regarded as an equal, and, within limits, the contract will be enforced. This seems very elementary, though it is the result of a long social process. There have been civilised legal codes in which no such principle of equality was recognised. But with this principle of contractual equality differences come in. Contracts refer to transferable rights, especially of property. Thus, where they are enforced, changed distributions of property are effected. Inequalities of fortune have now appeared, if they were not already there. Further, given either legal inheritance or freedom of bequest, the children of the new generation start life with unequal chances. Even if property, on the death of the owner, were simply to revert to the community, the children of richer parents would still have a better chance. And this is inseparable from the kind of equality that the system implies.

Individualist opponents of Social sm have found in this system, without qualification, the only practicable solution of the question of social justice in general. When the State gives commercially "a fair field and no favour,"

they say, personal merit tells to its full extent. Any attempt to interfere with free competition under a system of equal contractual rights is an injustice, as depriving the best of their due reward. For those who freely enter into bargains are the proper judges of the value they receive; and those who gain most by the transaction are obviously the best, according to a judgment from which there can be no legitimate appeal. Then, to reinforce the doctrine already arrived at on this economic basis of "supply and demand," the biological formula of "survival of the fittest" is brought in. In human life, as in nature generally, there is a "struggle for existence." The organisms best adapted for the struggle survive; so that clearly, if its action is interfered with, there will be survival of the unfit, and the race will deteriorate. Even what looks most like an element of fortune is treated as a fuller realisation of justice. The best—that is, those who have gained most—are able to give better openings to their children; and, on the general principle of heredity, that the best parents have the best offspring, this effects a further improvement in the race. Personal merit is automatically rewarded in each generation; and, in the succeeding generation, those born with the best natural dispositions have them reinforced by upbringing in the most favourable circumstances. All that the State can with advantage do is to make sure that this beneficent process of natural selection within the human race shall go on till man, like the older animal races, has become perfectly adapted to his environment.

I do not attribute this thoroughgoing optimism to any particular writer; but it seems a fair representation of the doctrine for which scientific warrant is claimed by many defenders of the existing order of things. At one time the formulæ taken out of their context and applied as conjuring charms against revolution were mainly those

of the "classical" political economy; now they come more from evolutionary biology. With the thinkers who elaborated them they stood for important truths; and perhaps they really mislead no one. Opponents of the present order are not made to relax their attack; and members of the possessing classes who may have an underlying suspicion that that order is not wholly just will hardly find a sufficient anodyne in the phrases of their champions in the Press. A logical refutation, however, may not be superfluous.

The most general reply is, of course, the familiar one that, as Spencer himself pointed out, "survival of the fittest" in his formula does not necessarily mean survival of the best. It only means survival of the fittest to survive under given conditions. Thus the argument that personal merit receives due recognition, that the naturally best get the best chance, and so forth, is valid only for those who desire that the present type of society should continue. A corresponding argument against restricting military anarchy by the strong hand of the central power would have been equally valid while that was in being. Those who desire more effective legal control over the competitive industrial type quite logically refuse to recognise that the individuals most adapted to it are ideally the best. But, it may be asked, what criterion of good and bad have you save that of biological or sociological adaptation to a really existent, not a merely ideal, order? The reply is that the criterion must be furnished by philosophical reflection on human ends. Are the individuals that survive under such and such conditions those that are capable of what seems to reflective consciousness a worthy human life? In this there is nothing that can be objected to as "transcendental." A similar criterion is capable of application to the lower animals. Some animal races have survived, in conditions of great defect

or great excess of appropriate food, by becoming of inferior organisation. What, then, is the test of inferiority? Atrophy or stunting of organs, involving less vivid and less varied consciousness. Let us see whether the tendencies (unchecked) of the present economic order are not to something similar; and let us try to put the case of an apologist.

Suppose that there exists a capitalist society pure and simple, with no check on the kind of contracts between employers and employed. In this society, it must be allowed, the types to survive would not be all identical. There would be variety of a kind. On the one hand, commercial and organising ability would lead to the highest positions. On the other hand, capacity for enduring long hours of toil and reducing physical wants to a minimum would enable masses of labourers to subsist. As machinery became more perfect skilled artisans would be less needed; but always, between the summit and the base of the social pyramid, there would be professional men of specialised intelligence, able to make themselves serviceable to the capitalist directors. Medicine and the application of science to industry would be of the greatest importance. For indispensable recreation there would be a demand on purveyors of coarse or light amusements. Disinterested culture, an educated admirer of the system might scornfully avow, would scarcely find a place. But is there not full scope for human intellect in making the resources of the planet available for the sustenance of the greatest mass? The comfort of the middle classes and the luxury of the few are necessary to give the spur to this employment of intellect. In some nearer approach to the completed type, such a defender might admit, with or without regret for the loss, amusements would have to be discountenanced in the interests of "efficiency." Still, he could point to the genuineness

and multiplicity of the virtues required to keep the system in working order. There would be a predominance of well-unified personalities, for no class could afford many subsidiary interests. The very lightness of the recreations, while they remained, would be an evidence of the strenuousness imposed by the normal working of the system. As positive characters marking out the different classes, there would be seen energy and directing power, highly-trained skill, and, at the bottom, the basal industrial qualities of laboriousness and abstinence. It might be hoped that, either by transmission of acquired characters or more slowly by natural selection, genuine castes would be produced. As these were consolidated, discontent with the order would become more and more evanescent; so that at length there might be formed a complete moving equilibrium, capable of lasting till the planet ceased to be an abode of animal life.

Now, admittedly, such a system might survive; it appears to comply with the material conditions. And if to any mind this seems worth while—if its ultimate extinction seems anything but a consummation devoutly to be wished—there is really no answer. Even in this case, however, the test is not mere survival, but the appeal to reflective consciousness. To some type of mind somewhere a prosperous, efficient, intelligent industrial plutocracy must seem a worthy end of all past efforts and aspirations of the human race. This type of mind, however, is not universal. "Increased production" may be preached by every voice that can get a hearing, may meet as an ideal with no perceptible opposition, and yet may utterly fail to evoke any response of enthusiasm in action. The popular mind is less taken in than a certain type of high but merely instrumental intelligence by the fallacy of elaborating means till the ends are suppressed for which they exist. And the world still has it in its power

to choose. Above the industrial mechanism there is the State. What the State will do depends on opinion. If this moves in the desired direction, then by resolute State-action the mechanism can be so transformed as to be the servant instead of the master of humanity.

If this transformation can be effected without the suppression of individual property and of liberty, we have surmounted both individualism in the ordinary sense and socialism. Now, State-control of capitalist industry, as distinguished from State-ownership of capital, leaves the rights of property in general as they have nearly always been conceived; that is, as subordinated to the common-wealth, not abstract and absolute. It is the extreme individualists who here maintain a revolutionary position. And it is in the interests of liberty itself, which they professedly have at heart, that the economic order needs control. The solution is, in the first place, to require on behalf of each person a certain minimum of material comfort and of leisure. Employers of labour must not be permitted to exact compliance with contracts reducing what they offer to bare subsistence in return for the whole available energy of the employed. How does this interfere with liberty in its sense of absence of restraint on the realisation of individual capacities; each person being treated as an end for himself? For, of course, the condition as regards the minimum of leisure applies only to employments which no one can be supposed to follow except on compulsion. The interference of the State tempers the coercion exercised by organisations within it. It in no way limits the really self-chosen work of private persons. State-action in the form of factory-legislation can be seen in actual experience not to have diminished liberty, but to have prevented the subjection of those affected by it to what would have been practically a condition of slavery. This, however, scarcely needs

further enforcing. It is now generally allowed. Commercial *laissez-faire* can be classed as a too-wide generalisation from a single group of doctrines (the most important being international Free Trade) which were sound in detail, and on the whole liberating, but which furnished no complete solution of the problem of the modern State.[1]

Equality conceived in a human sense, and not as a dead-level of subjection to the material conditions of life, means a possibility of real culture for all. Those capable only of the minimum would find employment in the occupations requiring less intelligence, and yet would not be wholly debarred from leisure and a humane mode of life. We can have nothing but approval for Comte's polity in so far as it sets up this as a positive ideal. The error is in expecting it to be realised by capitalists acting as an earthly providence. This is at once to give them too much power, and to enforce on them too great moral responsibility. Comte quite rightly holds that they are entitled to larger material rewards than either wage-earners or any class like that of his philosophic priests. The work of the latter may be of extreme value; but also it may be useless, and its degree of utility cannot be foreseen. Hence, on the whole, they must take an

[1] I had maintained this position on philosophical grounds in essays on "Individualism and State-action" and "Politics and Industry," now reprinted in the Appendix. A paragraph on child-labour, and, in particular, on the system of "half-time" in factories, is omitted in the new edition. In our own country no child under fourteen is permitted to go into regular industrial employment. Unfortunately, in the new countries to which modern industrialism spreads the mitigations arrived at in Europe do not seem to be readily adopted. In the United States of America child-labour was recently upheld, under the Federal Constitution, in virtue of "the power of the Supreme Court, which, by the vote of one judge who changed his declared opinion during the night, declared unconstitutional the law to forbid the employment of children" (*Daily News*, November 3, 1924).

economic position about as good as that of wage-earners in a well-ordered society. That is to say, they must receive a fixed and moderate payment which provides security. The ability of the industrial chiefs, though not so high inasmuch as it is less generalised, is directly applicable to practice, and in the organisation of a business is constantly brought to the test. Besides, to balance their chances of great profits, employers run the risk of losing all their capital. Thus it is fair that they should be able to add to their own material wealth. In fact, it is only in this way that the wealth of the community can be effectively increased. But, as Comte saw quite clearly, his special function tends to make the capitalist a strong egoist. This being the failing of the class, though it may be compensated or corrected in particular types, it is unfair to the class itself to require that it should be in practical ethics the directing power of the community. What is still more obvious is the absurdity of making the proletariate, in Comte's view more altruistic, abnegate its part in social direction, sacrificing all the political rights ever achieved by the Greek democracies or by the democracies of modern Europe. That the working classes, not having the chance of great gains, should have in compensation economic security is so evidently fair that some philanthropic employers, in the spirit of Comte's providential capitalists, have made attempts to realise this ideal in their own business; but such attempts were never successful on a large scale. The solution of "profit-sharing" has remained on the whole a dream of the mid-nineteenth century. At present what seems to have been arrived at as the most practicable system is a compromise in which security is to be attained partly by associations of workmen themselves and partly with the aid of the State. Capitalists as a class, it is already

clear, must be left to their own social function, which is that of accumulation under limits to be fixed more closely by law and opinion. It is to law and opinion, and not to moralised wealth acting from above, that we must look for the achievement of our ideal.

So far, while modifications in the economic order have been discussed, society has been treated in the main as consisting of industrial classes, employers or employed. Discriminations within the capitalist class have been unnecessary, since there is no question of a governing hierarchy or of a nomination of selected "dictators." From the point of view of a democratic polity, Comte's classification of the industrial chiefs, in the order of diminishing "generality" of their operations, under the heads of banker, merchant, manufacturer, and agriculturist, has a purely theoretical interest. In the State the capitalist is simply a citizen with one vote, like the labourer. For the sake of completeness, however, a word must be said on the class of landowners as distinguished from capitalists in the special sense. Economically considered, rent holds a peculiar position; and, historically, land-owning has been associated with the privileges of feudal lordship. Still, in the end, agriculture is an industry along with others. Whether it is best managed under the existing triple division of rent-receiving landlord, capitalist farmer, and wage-earning labourer, or without the first of these but with the two latter, or with union of all three functions in the peasant proprietor, is a question partly of economic efficiency and partly of the relation of this to the higher interests of the community. The State might make itself the universal landlord; but to this there is the objection that it would thus burden itself too much with direct economic functions better left under the stimulus of individual interests. Its proper part is to regulate the

conditions of employment; only in exceptional cases can it become itself the employer of labour, or be responsible for the appointment of employers. Against universal peasant-proprietorship there is the argument that fair and humane conditions of employment are better than a condition of economic independence with isolation, when the known effect of this is to produce a class of which the ruling passion is a narrow greed. A State that is neither socialist nor distinctively capitalist will not aim at multiplying the type of the "economic man." The most desirable solution probably is to retain the present separation of economic functions, but with destruction of the conception of them as terms in a graduated social hierarchy. Now, the remains of feudal privileges have gone, or will go, under the pressure of legislation proceeding "from status to contract." A clear-sighted reformer will not desire the reversal of this, and the return to some complex tenure dating perhaps from the time before feudalism. The true advance is, just as in relation to the economic order generally, a fuller recognition of the competence of the State to regulate and to revise the terms of contracts so as to substitute a real for a nominal equality in bargaining. For the rest, the process of wearing down the feelings that belong to the old order must be slow; unless, indeed, the education of opinion in a new ethico-political type of thought should, through some unforeseen change, proceed with revolutionary swiftness.

We must now go on and bring into the account directly the non-industrial elements of society. But, first it may be said, these to a certain extent emerge as an incidental result of an economic system that allows inheritance and bequest. There will be a class living on its income, whether in the form of rent or investments, and not engaged in profit-making business. Some members of

this class will do disinterested work by taking part in government, central or municipal, or in æsthetic or scientific occupations. No doubt many will simply give themselves to organised pleasure. Legally, they must be free to do this as part of a system that does not make all compulsorily servants of the State. Moralists no doubt will always feel some disapproval of that mode of life; as was admitted by a philosopher who was so little of a revolutionist in politics as Schopenhauer. I have recognised it myself, but now I am more inclined to point out the value, from a broadly and not narrowly social point of view, of an order in which some have the power to disregard opinion in trivial matters so that there may be a reserve of force for resistance in important matters. For an ideal of deadly compression we do not need to go to contemporary Bolshevism. According to the manifesto of the Fabian Socialists, who were the moderates of the movement, the ideal was that society should be welded into one class, with "a public opinion of inconceivable weight"; that for the production of individual types personal development is to be superseded by "social organisation." "Or, rather, the perfect and fitting development of each individual is not necessarily the utmost and highest cultivation of his own personality, but the filling, in the best possible way, of his humble function in the great social machine."[1] That which, in complete antithesis to the doctrine of the Fabian statesmen, I take to be the permanently right view, could not be put with more precision than it is by Shelley in an early letter[2]: "A human being is a member of a community, not as a limb is a member of the body, or as what is a part of a machine, intended only to contribute to some general joint result.....He is

[1] The quotations are from *Fabian Essays in Socialism*, and appear in a short notice which I wrote for *Mind*, April, 1890.

[2] Cited in W. L. Newman's *Politics of Aristotle*, vol. ii, p. 126.

an ultimate being, made for his own perfection as his highest end, made to maintain an individual existence, and to serve others only as far as consists with his own virtue and progress."

It has already been recognised in passing that the existence of a leisured class does, to some extent, provide for disinterested work. Without this element in it a society would lose plasticity. To set up a model of occupation carried on with no view to material interests, there must be a class—not necessarily large—whose members are free from all care about those interests. But will the right persons be thus endowed with leisure? Now here a concession must be made to the philosophical Conservative. As a result of history it has probably come about that the better stocks have, to some extent, been segregated for the higher positions. Force and fraud may have frequently led to the attainment of them; but, after all, it may be said, these are names given to the excesses or the deviation-forms of strength and intelligence. The evils that otherwise result are checked when the strong have at last been bound by laws. Social degeneration is sufficiently guarded against if there is not a closed system of caste. The higher ranks are then open in each generation to new ability; and their incompetent portions can decay and fall off.

Qualification of course is needed here. The argument from heredity has to be corrected by Galton's law of "return of the race to the mean." If one member of a particular stock shows distinguished ability, it does not follow that that height of distinction will be reproduced; there is even a presumption that it will not. All that can be said is that stocks which have produced distinguished members are on the average probably rather better. Further, we must remember that according to Weismann's theory of heredity, supported by very

eminent biologists, acquired qualities are not transmitted to descendants. What can take place is only selection of stocks having the capacity, under similarly favourable conditions, to develop in a similar direction. The powers of specialised action acquired in each generation are not handed on to the next; nor is even the potentiality of acquiring them increased. Thus the possibilities of what has been called "caste-segregation" are comparatively limited; fortunately, we may think, for otherwise how terribly specialised races and families would have become! It follows also that biological evolution has less direct explanatory power in relation to psychological evolution than it would have had on the Lamarckian or Spencerian theory. Not biological theories of race, but theories of the "social medium," furnish the true explanation of human as distinguished from animal psychology. This applies also to the psychology of classes. The modes of thinking and acting that characterise the members of a particular class result in the main not from difference of race, but from a certain social tradition impressed from childhood. It must be added that, since "imitation" runs through the whole of society, there are no class-traditions perfectly marked off. Thus a view like that of the post-Socratic Greek philosophers, with its stress on "education" in the generalised sense, is again triumphant over the belief in "race" pure and simple, which seemed to have been resuscitated by the new developments of biology. Yet we must not deny the residue of truth in this belief, whether held by an ancient or a modern Conservative. Education can do more with better material; and the distribution of a society into classes is not entirely a chance-distribution.

Would, then, the kind of selection that goes on in our present society be sufficient if the working of that society were made consistent with humanity and justice within

its own limits; if, that is to say, the possibility of a really human life were assured to all, and if the social flux between classes were facilitated rather than artificially hindered? For, as we have seen, under individualist industrialism some, through possession of inherited means, are free to promote the higher interests of humanity; and for others, in the chances of competition, freedom is attainable. To this we may reply that, while incidentally these interests are promoted, they are not sufficiently made the object of direct care. The principle of direct social selection tends to be almost exclusively industrial. The types selected are either those that have the capacity for achieving success in a world of commercial competition, or those that are fitted to subserve the interests of such as have this capacity. More varied kinds of personal merit, it could fairly be maintained, found an outlet in past orders of society than in that which, apart from political action, the economic forces are tending more and more to bring into being. If we are to have something better than a perfected and humanised industrialism, some further social modification is necessary.

Here the Platonic Republic offers itself as a higher social type. It is not the true political type, as has been admitted. All authority, in the Liberal State, must be responsible. There must be no irresponsible government even by those selected, if it were possible, for intellect and virtue. As Plato himself remarked in the *Statesman*, men do not differ so much from one another that any stand out from the rest as a race of herdsmen from the herd. And this in reality disposes of many of his own suggestions for detailed regulation. Socially, too, the system of caste, derived by Plato from the old hierarchical order of Egypt and the East, and reproduced with modifications in the European Middle Age, must be rejected.

It is not, indeed, a closed system (as the Egyptian caste of occupations also is said not to have been); but its ostensible principle is heredity. Transferences from the lower to the higher or from the higher to the lower caste were to be made in infancy; so that very special physiological and physiognomical accomplishments would have been needed in the guardians who were to advise the transfer. In fact, no such insight as is presupposed into human potentialities has even yet been acquired. This method of promoting the social flux could not have been applied in practice. As between the military class and the philosophical rulers, the method suggested was practicable; for all were to be educated together for a time, and then a separation made according as some showed more aptitude for bodily exercises and some for dialectical studies. But clearly, if there is to be a really open system, the passage from one extreme to the other, admitted in theory, must be made practicable also. Even when this exists to the full extent, it follows from the concession already made that there will exist a kind of hereditary nucleus of each class. Still, the recognition of personal merit as the determinant makes an important difference, provided an attempt is made to realise it by means of social institutions. We must not, with Comte, in effect put aside what he himself takes to have been the fundamental ground of agitation through the whole "revolutionary transition" by restoring in a new form the ideal of Catholic or Christian humility. This is both æsthetically and ethically the most repellent solution of all. There is a semblance of reason, there may even be a kind of mythical truth, in fictions about golden, silver, and brazen races. There is neither semblance nor reality of truth or reason in the idea of a purely arbitrary assignment of position in a purely human society. The decree of the divine despot, manifesting itself in the order

imposed by priest and king on earth, having gone, the sanction for this order goes with it.

The permanently applicable elements in the Platonic scheme are the notion of selecting the higher social ranks for moral and intellectual qualities, and the communism; this last not, of course, literally in the form of which Plato gives an outline. In fact, none of his successors ever seriously took it in that sense. We must retain private property for all ranks; and with it the monogamic family. Ideas of holding goods in common, and of "group-marriage," now that anthropological material has been sufficiently accumulated, seem to have been adequately worked out by experimental savages; so that further trying and failing on these lines is superfluous. Monogamy is in domestic evolution the terminus. Of course, it had been reached by the more advanced races before the present religion of Europe was adopted; and from this, as an ideal, it has gained nothing. The Catholic modifications have been on the whole injurious to it. The true line of development of marriage was in the direction of equal justice, of completely reciprocal rights and duties. While the ideal is fixity, not change, there can yet be no advantage to society in religiously binding together two persons in unwilling union. A legal contract is doubtless a necessity in actual human society; and this, to conform to the ideal, must be for life. Contracts for a limited period (say, five years) have been proposed, on the ground that the ideal should not be enforced by law on all. The reply is that no doubt the contract will be broken sometimes, and there will be extra-legal attachments; but that deviations which will exist need not therefore be encouraged by the State. They must be left to opinion —severe or tolerant, as the case may be, in particular societies. The Liberal State has undoubtedly an interest in the permanence of marriage. The irrefragable defence

of the monogamic family, as of private property, is that no basis equally good can be found for the development of distinctive individualities. Permanent marriage has, in fact, been treated as an obstacle in the way of those who desire to produce the "mass-mind." Ecclesiastical marriage, rationally viewed, is of course simply an affair of personal religious conviction, and is nothing legally except in so far as by particular States it is treated as the equivalent of a civil contract. When it comes to æsthetic or ethical comparison, we certainly need not fear to compare the ideals of Milton or Shelley or Mill, who in one form or another held views in opposition to those of the oldest Christian Churches, with official dissertations of which even the religious world is becoming ashamed.[1] If the views of Milton on divorce, at least in their expression, are sometimes antipathetic to modern feeling, this is due to a certain archaic patriarchalism of sentiment derived from the Hebrew Scriptures; but, incidentally, Milton too recognises in theory that the woman's claim to liberation must run parallel with the man's. And English law has, in recent times, established the rule of justice that the conditions of divorce for both sexes must be equal.

This is a little aside from the problem that the communism of the *Republic* was brought in to solve; but it was perhaps needful to repudiate any ultra-revolutionary views that might be imagined in the background in association with the term. The questions we have to ask are, first, whether in existing society there is any class corresponding with that to which Plato assigned the highest rank; and, in the next place, if such a class exists,

[1] For its attitude to human love the early Church found its sanction in the words attributed to Jesus (Matt. xix, 12) and to Paul (I Cor. vii). See also Rev. xiv, 4, for the type which it regarded as perfection.

what ought to be its economic relation to the rest of the society.

There is such a class; and the account of its evolution is given in Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, under the head of "Professional Institutions." These, as he shows, have a social origin different from that of "Industrial Institutions," to which he devotes separate treatment. While these last are for the "sustentation" of life, the first are for its "augmentation." This includes the culture which, I have concluded, is the true end of society, as distinguished from the instruments of its material existence. For the sake of convenience, it may be well to note down the names of the professions as Spencer gives them. They are, in his order: Physician and surgeon; dancer and musician; orator and poet, actor and dramatist; biographer, historian, and man of letters; man of science and philosopher; judge and lawyer; teacher; architect; sculptor; painter. How all these, in their different ways, augment life is explained in a preliminary passage, which, though rather long for a quotation, must be cited in full:—

> It is obvious that the medical man who removes pains, sets broken bones, cures diseases, and wards off premature death, increases the amount of life. Musical composers and performers, as well as professors of music and dancing, are agents who exalt the emotions and so increase life. The poet, epic, lyric or dramatic, along with the actor, severally in their respective ways yield pleasurable feelings and so increase life. The historian and the man of letters, to some extent by the guidance they furnish, but to a larger extent by the interest which their facts and fictions create, raise men's mental states and so increase life. Though we cannot say of the lawyer that he does the like in a direct way, yet by aiding the citizen to resist aggressions he furthers his sustentation and thereby increases life. The multi-

> tudinous processes and appliances which the man of science makes possible, as well as the innumerable intellectual interests he arouses and the general illumination he yields, increase life. The teacher, alike by information given and by discipline enforced, enables his pupils more effectually to carry on this or that occupation and obtain better subsistence than they would else do, at the same time that he opens the doors to various special gratifications: in both ways increasing life. Once more, those who carry on the plastic arts—the painter, the sculptor, the architect—excite by their products pleasurable perceptions and emotions of the æsthetic class, and thus increase life.[1]

Not all of these professions are of sufficient dignity for the highest rank in the Platonic State. That is much more limited. The general correspondence, however, will be clear on comparison. For in Plato's view the functions of his guardians correspond to those of the priesthood in a theocracy; and Spencer has shown inductively that the professions arise out of the early priesthood, or, as he says, out of "Ecclesiastical Institutions" (separately dealt with). The early priest, having, according to the accepted theory, special relations with the invisible powers that control nature and human life, is enabled by the offerings of the community to keep himself in association with these. Thus, it is supposed, benefits will be gained from the gods, and possible injuries warded off by their aid. Through the leisure thus acquired, the class which at first has naturally a kind of speculative bias is enabled to accumulate knowledge, real as well as fancied, and to practise arts that enrich life, though they are not necessary for its bare support. Hence arise by degrees the

[1] A necessary addendum to Spencer's list seems to be the class of engineers, who form the link between professional and industrial life. Comte foresaw very clearly the immense future of engineering, in its most general sense, as a branch of applied science.

extremely heterogeneous "professions" brought together in the list. As society differentiates, these branch off and become independent and sub-divide. Nevertheless, they long preserve reminiscences of their origin. Some are still paid nominally by "honoraria," not by wages contracted for. Some have the nature of public offices, for which the payment is fixed. The theory was that the exercise of them was spontaneous and disinterested, and that the recipients of benefits offered voluntary gifts to those that conferred them or were in a position to confer them. On the same terms what are called by Spencer the agencies for "defence" and "regulation"—that is to say, the military and governmental organisations—were supported. These, together with the existing ecclesiastical agency, are still supported in the same way. In the Army and Navy, the Established Church, and the Civil Service, the method is not that competitors for appointments should offer their services at a certain price, and that, other things being equal, the lowest tender should be taken. Competence is determined by what is at least supposed to be trained judgment. Officially, the rate of payment is not bargained for, but is graduated and fixed; the graduation being in theory according to seniority with degree of qualification, not according to an estimate of the economic value of the services rendered. Hence those just named are typical "professions." The others, as they have branched off, have tended to become more industrialised. Must we expect this to go on indefinitely, and rejoice in it? Is the ideal that everyone, whatever else he may be, should be fundamentally a "man of business"? Or is the process one of departure from type, which, we may hope, belongs only to an age of transition? And, as the ground of this hope, are there any signs of a counter-tendency—a movement back from private to public payment?

It seems to me that the better view on this point is held by Comte, whose position was that the ideal of the professions ought to be extended to industrial activity also. Every kind of work, he holds, is essentially a service done to the community. It cannot, in the strict sense, be remunerated. There is no means of fixing accurately what each person's services are worth in terms of the exchange of commodities. The true conception in all cases is not that of "earning a living," but of doing certain work and being supported while doing it. What the nature of this support should be depends on the nature of the employment, for different employments call for different material conditions. In practice, however, he does not propose to apply the typical mode of supporting the professions to industrial activities. These last are left to contracts between private persons, supervised only by the moralising agency of the priesthood. Similarly, it may be recalled, Plato did not apply his communism to the industrial, but only to the military and philosophic, classes. For the class in Comte's polity that corresponds (though not exactly) to Plato's guardians, the mode of support is that of the typical professions now existing; but on a modest scale. There is to be a public payment of the priesthood just sufficient to assure due independence and leisure. So far as this part of the scheme is concerned, it is simply the Platonic communism made practicable.

Now, the interesting and remarkable thing is that both Plato and Comte, in framing the economic order for their highest social class, were going back to the original principles of the liberal professions, as made manifest by Spencer in tracing their evolution. Of course, they oversimplified greatly—Comte as much as Plato. They would have liked to reduce all the variety and complexity of actual professional institutions to the unity and simplicity

of the philosopher taking the place of the priest. The philosopher, priest, or guardian was to be at the same time man of science. There would be little need for medicine or law when the members of the State observed the rules of temperance and ceased to quarrel; and this, no doubt, would be the case when they were at once intelligently and sympathetically governed. The priest, naturally, would be the teacher. If he did not himself practise the fine arts so far as they are permissible, he would supervise them. In any case, their modes of expression would have to be rigorously pruned. The system, in short, as both thinkers came to recognise, was a simplified and, in their view, rationalised hierocracy. In their love of regularity, they would have undone what Spencer regards as the progressive order of the whole process. And yet they seized the essential meaning of the group of institutions in its practical bearing; while Spencer has developed it inductively, but, in his ever-recurrent admiration for industrial anarchy, quite missed the practical suggestiveness of his own generalisations.[1]

If we are to retain the heterogeneity of the professions as a permanent result of progress, it will follow that we must not try to make of them a governing class or a Church. For this, the simplification aimed at by Plato and Comte would be indispensable. Besides, the political order involved in this kind of scheme has been rejected. We find the ideal of the Liberal State to be as incompatible with government by irresponsible intelligence as

[1] After all this was written, I read with delight in Spencer's *Autobiography* (vol. ii, pp. 450–51) that his study of the origin of the professions was the result purely of architectonic impulse and æsthetic sentiment. He did not regard it as of any public importance, or as likely to add in any appreciable degree to his own reputation; but simply desired to fill up a gap in his work. Thus there could not be a better illustration of the indirect social value of absolutely disinterested science.

by a hereditary caste or by irresponsible wealth. What remains of value in the conception is social, and not properly political. A considerable place, it appears, can be reserved in the social order for selection by trained judges, as distinguished from competition in the market-place, and for public payment, as distinguished from dependence on private possessors of wealth. This, as has been noted, is in many professions the present usage. In others there may be observed a tendency to return to it. The medical profession, for example, is coming to depend more on public appointments with fixed payments attached, and less on the chances of private practice. If a legal reform advocated by Spencer, among others, were carried out, there would be the same process of return in the case of law. For a system of gratuitous justice—which might at any time become a definite aim of reformers—would involve public payment of advocates as well as judges. This general movement, of course, tends to reduce the very great prizes in the professions. On the system, fewer fortunes would be made approximating to the scale of success in business. This being the outlook, a professional career would act as a kind of automatic moral test. Intellectual tests being made more stringent, so as to exclude the less able members of the wealthier classes, a high order of ability would thus be secured; and yet it would be clear in advance that smaller pecuniary rewards must be looked for than in a commercial career. Thus the money-loving and luxury-loving type would be deterred from entrance. At the same time, comparative absence of the early struggle with poverty would diminish the need in the professional classes to postpone marriage. Indirectly, the effect of this on the community would be eugenic. In the professional hierarchy itself (which we must now think of as including women as well as men), the way to success

being to a less extent through quasi-commercial competition, the modes of thought and feeling that accompany this would find their territory narrowed. Through social imitation they might even tend to be extruded from commerce itself. The payment need not come uniformly from the State. It might come also from systems of endowment or from municipalities. In general, however, to avoid routine and officialism, it would be necessary to place at the summit, for determining the highest appointments, political chiefs who are not specialists, but stand for the intelligence of the community as a whole. Premature fixation of sciences has come not, as Plato expressed the fear that it might, from the natural conservatism of a democratic State or its representatives, but from the prejudices of the majority in corporations of experts. These, however, are details which there is no need to elaborate. The essential thing is that a certain relatively disinterested character of one group of social functions should find reinforcement in custom, and that this disinterested character should become in opinion the ideal.

With all this, it will no doubt remain true that for much of the best work, both scientific and artistic, humanity must depend on fortune. Probably the artistic professions will always have to remain in a less organised state than the others. In the early modern period there was a tradition of "patronage" by which the arts and literature partly lived. Then for a short time the emergence of a few great writers who made a wide appeal to a much larger educated public than that of the eighteenth century brought about the illusory appearance that fine literature had at length found a permanent economic basis in popular support. The advent of a still larger public has done nothing to confirm the hopes excited by the successes of writers like Macaulay and Carlyle and

Ruskin. Education pushed by authority with a view to practical life and industrial efficiency has obviously nothing in it to help to form literary or artistic judgment. Endowment, that ancient bugbear of the straiter sect of *laissez-faire* economists, is just as necessarily a part of the institutions of the future if art and letters are to survive as it is in the case of science and philosophy. And, in the modern world, there is certainly no danger that a too rigorous standard of academical "correctness" will repress individuality. The danger to liberty of thought and expression now lies elsewhere. It may be suggested, indeed, that a new social direction such as is supposed, dethroning the commercial standard from its supremacy, must tell on the general attitude towards the arts. Yet the uncertainty of discovering genius, and the chances of a fortunate coincidence of this with a position of complete independence, must make us fall back as a reserve of hope on the apparently functionless class with unearned leisure. From the point of view of culture, this is one essential reason against suppressing the class, as it would be suppressed under any scheme that could be called socialistic.[1]

But suppose that, notwithstanding these or similar modifications in the social structure, the prepotency of commercial wealth should still be too great. In dealing with this problem we must first repeat the concession already made, that commercial enterprise is quite rightly the means of attaining the highest pecuniary rewards possible in the community. It is fair that men whose aim is wealth should have a career open to them as well as men of different kind. In pursuing this aim they perform a definite social function. Those who care less

[1] An outline of this speculation on the endowment of the professions is set forth in Appendix I to *The Neo-Platonists* (1901, 2nd ed. 1918).

for wealth have no right to complain if less falls to their share. But we must remember that wealth gives power, and the exercise of individual power on a certain scale may affect the social type. Now, success in accumulating money is a presumption against and not in favour of competence to direct its employment in the interests of culture. The State is evidently far more competent than individuals whose aim has been material gain to endow the higher interests of mankind. In politics the evils that directly result from the powers wielded by men who have acquired great fortunes of the newer kind are generally recognised. Has human society, then, not the right to guard itself against excesses resulting from a mechanism which it finds generally convenient? The mechanism of an ancient democracy brought with it possibilities of establishing a tyranny. Hence it was corrected by political devices which, condemned by open or secret sympathisers with oligarchy or despotism, were at last vindicated by liberal historians. The complications of modern industrialism, on a system permitting unlimited accumulation, have led to a new and pernicious power of individuals naturally selected through qualities which, on any rational view of personal merit, are of a comparatively low kind. Undoubtedly we must attribute this to an impersonal process, and not to some special perversity in the class of "multi-millionaires," who are merely the ablest or luckiest of their type. But all the more, to deal with the new danger a new method has become necessary.

Now, whatever other changes may come about, I do not see how society is to issue from the present order without some direct measure of limitation. Industrial plutocracy does not seem likely to disappear merely in consequence of social changes not touching it directly. It rather tends to self-conservation. The only per-

manently effective measure against the extremely wealthy class—the practical tyrants of a nominal democracy—will be to fix a legal maximum of income. More than one thinker has suggested this, but I am not sure that the corollary has usually been drawn, that existing accumulations above the limit must be directly confiscated to the uses of the State. If the present holders of the immense and ramifying power given by huge masses of capital in an industrial order were left in possession without new competitors, this would not only nullify the measure, but would establish permanently a narrower oligarchy. It is as if an attempt were made to reform the House of Lords by creating no new peerages. If distribution were compelled, but the recipients left to the discretion of the possessors, the result would only be the establishment of rather larger family dynastic groups. Admittedly, to make the measure effective, a strong force of public opinion would be necessary that would not tolerate evasions; but this would in reality somewhat mitigate the shock of revolution. By the time that opinion against great aggregates of wealth has become deep and strong it will have affected the possessors.[1]

To sum up: the methods of emergence from the present order that have been advocated are, first, systematic State-regulation of industry; second, the more definite constitution of a non-industrial element within

[1] I have cut down the passage advocating legal limitation of incomes. The proposal—to be found in Mill's *Political Economy*—has been superseded as method by the very drastic taxation of the rich brought into force during and since the war. The mitigation or extension of this must evidently depend on the circumstances of particular countries. For European civilisation the economic problem seems to be to steer between industrial plutocracy and "dictatorship of the proletariate"—the Scylla and the "fell Charybdis" of modern democracy.

the social organism by placing the intellectual professions as far as possible on a footing of endowment and of selection by qualified judges rather than of quasi-commercial competition and dependence on the market; third, direct curtailment of the possibilities of acquiring social predominance by the accumulation of wealth. All these methods, of course, imply rejection of the anarchical theory of the State. In truth, if we are to contrast the more organic and "spiritual" with the more mechanical parts of the social organism, it is not State-direction that should be regarded as an affair of mere mechanism, but the uncontrolled operations of industry. No doubt these can in the end be moralised only by the human agents that carry them on; but, as a condition, the State must in some degree embody in law the conceptions which the better minds have formed concerning the relation of the means of subsistence to life itself and its ends. Complete embodiment of ethics in law must be allowed to be both impracticable and undesirable; but, in the outline given, I think the fixing of this as the legislative ideal has been avoided. At any rate, the methods of those who claim distinctively the name of Individualists, apart from single though important questions such as Free Trade, have been proved by experience to be mistaken. Their notion of the ideal political order as "anarchy plus the policeman" is obsolete. Yet they did, after all, generalise from some particular cases where they were right. And, in their ideal of human spontaneity, they had hold of a permanent truth. If the control of the State over industry is now invoked, this is not with the aim of superseding a liberal by an authoritarian ideal, but, on the contrary, with the aim of so bringing into action public reason that individual spontaneity may be fully realised.

Chapter VI

THE STATE AND RELIGION

On the subject of this chapter there is not a great deal to say. In spite of a long phase of indifference of feeling, it becomes ever more obvious that the policy known as separation of Church and State is inevitable. Legal judgments have made it clear that in England the State, outside its right to determine the meaning of the faith established, refrains from all banning either of creeds or antagonism to creeds. At the same time the Established Church, in its most influential section, has come to look upon the claim of the State to exercise a general control over its formularies as a fetter. In this it is simply reverting to ecclesiastical tradition, which sometimes sleeps, but when it is awake always holds to some special competence in the clergy to pronounce on questions of cult and dogma. Some liberal minds will regret this. The connexion of the Church of England with the State has been entirely to the advantage of rationalising movements in theology, and certainly in those portions of the English-speaking world where there are no established Churches intolerant orthodoxy is socially not less powerful. The system of compromise, however, will clearly go whether now or later. If it goes earlier than many expect, the cause will be not least in the claim of the Churches, since they cannot rule the State, at any rate to determine for themselves what is orthodoxy and what is not.

For the claim of the Christian Church, dating from a very early period of its history, was that its doctrine

should dominate the world. Apart from sporadic acts of intolerance, exercised against an occasional philosopher, it was the Church that brought into the ancient world the will to persecute. It is true that Christianity was itself subjected to some repression as a danger to the Roman State, but we can educe from ecclesiastical legend very little knowledge of the actual circumstances. We know that the Church set itself up as a rival polity, taking its name, *ecclesia*, from the Assemblies in the Greek cities. Its claim was not that its worship should be admitted among the older cults, but that all of these, which it openly despised and derided, should be abolished. St. Peter, the chief of the Apostles, is represented, even in a work written, in the opinion of modern critics, to conciliate the Roman Government, as claiming for the new religion, in succession to the Jewish national theocracy, the right to inflict capital punishment on dissidents (Acts iii, 22, 23): "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul, which will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people." Towards the founding of this new and cosmopolitan theocracy the idea of the Inquisition and of the religious wars of the future had already been prepared by the old; as may be seen in the thirteenth chapter of Deuteronomy.

We must admit, however, that the dominion established first over the Roman Empire and then over the barbarian kingdoms that followed its break-up might have been much worse. Since the Church was to be "catholic," it must include all kinds of people. Much Greek philosophy had been taken over by the learned among its apologists while it was struggling for a recognised position. There were enlightened men among the

bishops, and ancient literature was saved from the destruction which monkish fanatics would gladly have made complete. As it developed in contact with its own world, the Catholic system showed still more absorbent power and flexibility. The world over which it presided became, after a long lapse, the world of a new culture. In the twelfth century, though the rationalising Abélard was persecuted and his enemy, the arch-obscurantist of the age, Bernard of Clairvaux, was canonised as St. Bernard, more cautious disputants were allowed to carry forward Abélard's method. Aristotle's *Physics* and *Metaphysics*, after being put under the ban for a season, were adopted as official; and even "infidel" Arabian commentators had an honourable place conceded to them in the studies of the time. Under the theocracy which culminated in the thirteenth century, some of the scholastic philosophers were themselves made saints.

But the dominance of the ecclesiastical power, even in this its great period, was never entirely unresisted. From the beginning of the fourteenth century historians date its break-up, and that meant the dim dawn of the modern movement by which the representatives of religion were brought under the secular State. This was in part a reversion to the order of antiquity over which the Church had triumphed.

The arguments formulated by the lawyers of Philip the Fair on behalf of the King as the true representative of the People against the Papacy and its claims curiously prefigure what was known more than three centuries later as "Hobbism." Immense and complicated changes, including a new and definitive schism of the West, were required before such a formidable scheme as that of *Leviathan* for putting the ecclesiastical power once for all in a subordinate position could be sent forth with practical effect into a world no longer mediæval but

modern. Yet the beginnings went far back into the scholastic period, in which, though only in Latin, and only for a public equipped with technical learning, every form of polity from autocracy to communistic equality had been intellectually defended.

Although Hobbes's "Christian Commonwealth," with the civil power supreme, cannot itself be called a Liberal State, it prepared the way for it on one side. And, as if by a kind of predetermined destiny, the Puritan theocratic model prepared the way for it on the other. For this was set against what remained in England of the Catholic discipline. The ecclesiastical courts to try "heresy" went down in effect with the old monarchy. Hobbes could put his freethought into *Leviathan* (1651); and Cromwell as dictator, while establishing civil order, introduced much of religious toleration. This did not altogether cease when the monarchy returned with Charles II; and Hobbes became, though by no means an official, yet a fashionable philosopher. The further development by Spinoza in the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus* (1670) brought out the implications of Hobbes's doctrine when independently interpreted. And these two works, it can scarcely be doubted, were immensely influential with kings and statesmen behind the scenes for more than a century to come.

They were very much needed in view of both the past and the future. The Christian theocracy of the West had indeed been shattered as a result of the uprising initiated by Luther in the sixteenth century. Yet the claims of its divided parties remained, in theory, identical with those of the whole. Geneva was set against Rome. For Calvinist as for Catholic, it was the duty of the civil magistrate to carry out the directions of God's representatives on earth, and to pursue the rebels against their dogma to the death. In estimating the problem before

statesmen we must remember how firmly rooted in opinion and feeling those claims were. The books universally regarded as the Word of God contained, among their various documents, priestly compilations in which tolerance was treated as the greatest of crimes. The one unpardonable offence of the Kings of Israel had been their recognition of cults not identical with that which was centralised at Jerusalem. To this central position the Rome of the Popes claimed to have succeeded; and the clergy of the new Churches, continuing the tradition as a matter of course, upheld their own creed, or its essentials, as divinely revealed, and not with impunity to be deserted by any who had once been under the discipline of the faith. Thus complete formal equality of all religions before the law was impossible. Kings or statesmen who might try to secure any approach to this could only appeal to the enlightened heathen or to a few isolated thinkers in their own time. Against the attempt, clerical demagogues could stir up the deepest popular conviction, ingrained not only through their own most strongly impressed teaching, but by the whole conception of historic Christendom as a spiritual and visible unity in a "form of sound words," a "faith once delivered to the saints." Toleration appeared at the best as laxity; conscientious persecuting bigotry was the mark of a true anointed servant of God. All that could be done on behalf of the humanist ideal—now again in sight after its millennial eclipse—was that the State should recognise one Church as the true Church, but should determine its character so far as this was not incompatible with its nature as a Christian Church, and should make its yoke as light as possible. By degrees a more or less illogical and shifting toleration of dissidents could be introduced; but all depended on making the Church subordinate to the State.

Now by Hobbes and Spinoza the documents appealed to by the "Kingdom of Darkness," as Hobbes called the system of ecclesiastical rule, were turned against itself. Above the ecclesiastical corporations was placed, on ostensibly scriptural grounds, the civil ruler. He had the same authority in the Church as in the State—of which, indeed, the Church was only an aspect. His true policy was to simplify dogmas, to recognise the "liberty of philosophising" as it had been recognised while the "religion of the Gentiles" prevailed, and to stop all persecution of religious teachings that did not interfere with political order. This policy he was entitled to carry out even against the opinion of the clergy; for a Christian magistrate surely held no lower place than a heathen magistrate, and it was to heathen magistrates that the Apostles of Christianity had appealed. No overlordship was to be recognised either of the papacy or of a presbytery. The sovereign power, whether monarchical or aristocratic or democratic, might accept a particular religion as the religion of the State; but, so far as religion entered into the political order, it could claim no authority that was other than derivative from that of the sovereign.

Explicit recognition of more than one religion as lawful followed as a matter of course when it could be shown that this was compatible with the preservation of peace. The case for a general toleration was argued out by Locke after the Revolution of 1688, and found recognition in England in the eighteenth century, though various disabilities were long connected with membership of other Churches than that "by law established." In the meantime, the precarious nature of a tolerance that was merely the result of a truce and not of principle—however illogically that principle might be applied—had been seen in France. Near the end of the sixteenth century the

Edict of Nantes had permitted the Protestant as well as the Catholic worship; but this was merely a measure of convenience to stop further civil war. Conscientious feeling against toleration was always in reserve, and before the end of the next century (in 1685) the Edict was revoked through clerical incitement, with the result that those who remained openly Protestants had to flee at the risk of their lives. This is sufficient to show the extreme importance of some ground of principle as the basis of a practical system. The philosophic principle of toleration once acknowledged, feelings of humanity could gather round it, making the renewal of persecution at length impossible; but expediency by itself was too weak.

So it might have been even as late as the nineteenth century without the strong intellectual barriers set up long before by *Leviathan* and the *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*. There have not been wanting admired neo-Catholic sophists who, if they could, would have brought back in the name of conscience the feelings, with the ideas, of a persecuting theocracy. Thus it is not surprising that for a long time relative freedom could be secured only by continuing the direct association of the Church with the State. Liberal and enlightened minds among the clergy could be supported, by making the civil courts finally supreme in cases of "heresy," against the bigoted and the ignorant. "Free Churchmen" had a recognised, if not an equal, place within the State. The policy, however, of keeping national Established Churches reasonable by the dominance of a Liberal State gradually lost its appeal through various new forces let loose after the French Revolution. Perhaps the decisive force in England may turn out to have been the Catholic revival of the Tractarians in what had long been regarded and is still regarded by many as a Protestant Church. With this its opposites co-operated. There was an evangelical

revival intensely opposed to the "Romanising" school, but affirming with peculiar narrowness and hardness the fundamental dogmas of popular Christianity as against the Deism of the eighteenth century, to which the ideas of the "latitudinarian" clergy seemed to bear too much resemblance. Against both revivals there was a new and aggressive rationalism associated with democratic politics, and denying the Christian dogmas openly. Religious Nonconformity also was becoming a stronger power, and the Establishment was attacked as degrading religion by placing it under "State patronage and control." This new attitude made some appeal both to theocratic or quasi-theocratic and to rationalist feeling. A State Church began to look like an imposture. And so, as an empirical result, without much direct application of philosophic thought, the new policy emerged which has been generalised under the name of "separation of Church and State."

On the Continent, through equally varied and complex but not identical causes, the formula of "a free Church in a free State" at length emerged. The Roman Catholic Church, through its abiding theocratic claims, has made itself at last impossible in France as a normal Establishment; and the drift seems identical everywhere. It seems very probable that in the end there will be no Churches that are not in a political sense "free Churches," though of course the greatest Church of them all will never cease to regard as its rightful place that which it held in the days of Hildebrand, when all the kingdoms of this world were at its feet.

The result seems to be that in the next period, if there are no considerable reactions, we shall have a system of "free Churches" analogous in legal position to the philosophic schools of antiquity, the status of which was that of religious societies dedicated to the worship of the

Muses and supported by endowments mostly of private persons. The difference as compared with antiquity will be that the State no longer has an official cult. Nor will it have an official dogma. The "spiritual power," in any sense of the term that we can still accept, is not a corporate power, but expresses itself by means of individual thinkers, poets, and artists. To this new spiritual power of modern times the Church or the Churches, it can be freely allowed, have contributed many distinguished names; and, in virtue of the philosophical element in Christian theology, no doubt they will continue to provide an initiation for many on the way to the individual thought that goes beyond inherited tradition. For intellectual insurgence, though one way, is not the only way to freedom. The powerful dissolvent effect of science and criticism on the tradition may at length reduce all that is seriously upheld by the best religious minds to a philosophy, and if we boldly let loose our imaginations we may even look forward to a consensus of all the great religions in some ultimate philosophical synthesis.

This is no doubt remote, but historically a certain convergence may be seen by which they tend to coincide with the most developed philosophies in placing contemplation above action for the higher order of their votaries. Aristotle and Plotinus had actual influence on later religion by their exaltation of the theoretic life; and the similar strain in Spinoza makes him attractive to some religious minds. Coleridge planned what he called a "clerisy," and received the approval of John Stuart Mill. Whether the State ought not to give encouragement to some such contemplative institution is an interesting question. Plotinus almost succeeded in getting his "Platonopolis" endowed by a Roman Emperor; and Berkeley, after a somewhat similar attempt of his own, which was taken up and afterwards dropped by the

English Government, expressed his regret for the failure of his predecessor, and thought there might still be room for such a scheme, provided there was nothing monkish in it. For the modern world, however, safety will probably lie for a long time in the agnosticism of the State. We have also philosophies, such as Pragmatism, that place action first, and they can appeal to two such great, and at the same time different, thinkers as Kant, who laid it down that there is nothing absolutely good but a good will, and Comte, whose doctrine was that we must think always in order to act. To claim, on behalf of the priority of intellect to will, that Aristotle and Plotinus and Spinoza are not inferior names, and to point out that neither the French nor the German thinker was actually a Pragmatist, would look too much like an appeal to authority. For the philosopher, there can be no decision but by individual reflection on ends and means. That the State of the future should call together a Philosophic Council or Synod to decide between the rival doctrines, and should enforce the decision of the majority as the basis of public education, would simply be a reversion to Constantine and the "Nicene formula." Let us hope that history will not thus repeat itself.

Chapter VII

EDUCATION

Not to leave the ideal too indeterminate, an attempt must be made to give some outline of the type of education to be promoted in a State that directly interests itself in culture. In this concluding chapter I intend to discuss the respective claims of science, philosophy, and literature. Education, in its widest sense, means more than this. It includes, for example, physical training, direct moral instruction, training to appreciate the fine arts; but a limit is necessary, and I have selected the topics commonly associated with it by convention. "Technical education," as belonging only to the special training for particular trades or professions and not contributing directly to the ends of human life, must be excluded on principle from a general outline. In the ideal State it would be an affair for subordinate branches of administration.

By science is usually understood physical science, based on mathematics and culminating in the science of man biologically treated. This scheme may be extended at one end by placing logic before mathematics. At the other end, the biological treatment of man is not the scientific terminus; after that ought to come, first, sociology, and then the psychology of man as an individual thinking, feeling, and active being, formed in a certain social medium. Within this group of subjects for instruction physical science has special importance, as showing forth the best-organised method of discovering

verifiable truth. Logic and mathematics give the truth of self-consistency and of ideal constructions in number and space, with certain general rules for testing inferences regarding facts and events. By themselves, however, they furnish neither application to the actual things we know nor an imaginative construction of these to form a picture of the universe. The physical sciences help us to form such a picture, in which all its groupings and their changes are exhibited as in accordance with uniform laws called "laws of nature." This is carried into more detail by biology and the anthropological sciences, but the details present themselves as applications of methods seen in their greatest perfection in physical science. It was from the physical sciences, mathematically treated, that the idea of uniform laws of nature first emerged. Hence the special importance of these sciences in education. There can be no doubt that the elements of them, with notions of their method, ought to form part of a liberal course of instruction. It is something to know their results, as these might be acquired incidentally during an education purely literary; but there is an incompleteness in this if it is not illuminated, to some slight extent at least, by direct knowledge of the methods that, in a way appreciable by all, yield a kind of truth, though it may be only a truth about the constant conjunctions of appearances. Prisoners in the Platonic cave, whatever else they may come to learn, cannot dispense with knowing something accurate about the shadows on the wall.

The formal training at the beginning has special value as discipline in thinking, and the sciences that come later in the series concern us more closely as human beings than the intermediate ones. Hence these also have their part in general instruction. Each subordinate group may be an object of specialising from the point of view of

culture. An individual student may simply have more taste for one group than for another; when this is so, he ought to specialise in it if there is no sufficient external reason against. Further, he may have a gift for advancing science in a particular direction. In this case, of course, there is still better reason for specialising. For the general body of students it will probably be well to bear in mind that they are not likely to become men of science. This being so, great attention to the kind of laboratory training, for example, that would fit them for a scientific career is a waste of educational energy. It is enough that they should gain some insight from practice into the nature of scientific method. As the truths of the sciences are by degrees condensed and integrated and made communicable on the analogy of the older subjects, reduction of the time necessary to learn them at school will become easier. The constant growth of detailed knowledge need not affect this, since the object is not to instil the greatest quantity of possibly "useful knowledge," but to give mental training along with a basis for a coherent view of the order of the universe and of human life.

Science considered in this way leads on to philosophy, by which its parts are linked together in a unified system. For a complete classification of the sciences critical examination of knowledge is a necessity. The result of philosophic criticism is to present objective science as a statement of laws of phenomena. Phenomena are appearances for consciousness. By theorising on consciousness and its implications, philosophy proper, or metaphysics, arrives at a doctrine of reality. The name for this doctrine is Ontology. On the side of action and of feeling, as distinguished from intellect, the most generalised kind of reflection leads to ethical, political, and æsthetic philosophy. Ethics and politics, as well as

metaphysics, have a necessary reaction on science. The actual and possible branches of scientific investigation being of indefinite multiplicity, the generalised view of these, whether from the practical or the theoretical side, keeps them in a kind of unity which, by themselves, they tend to lose. This is the element of truth in Comte's attack on the "dispersive specialism" characteristic of the science of our day. His own view, however, in its turn, has to be corrected by a wider conception of philosophy, by a fuller recognition of the value of science itself purely as culture, and by the principle of liberty as regards the pursuit of the different branches of science. It is not for philosophy to prescribe what particular topics men of science shall take up, but only to furnish, if it can, some rational outline of a scheme by which their relative importance may become manifest.

The principle of liberty applies, of course, directly to private investigations. It means not only that there should be legal freedom to choose a line of research, but that there should be no moral disapproval of work undertaken primarily to gratify intellectual curiosity. For, in an ideal order, disinterested sentiments with no particular ethical colouring would have a recognised place. These qualifications made, we can at the same time admit that for public education the directing idea must be that of a generalised relation to social life. Unlimited specialisation will not be encouraged in schools and universities. The minuter investigations will no doubt be determined, so far as they are not simply an expression of the private liberty of the investigator, by industrial and other needs that will be kept in view by technical colleges. These again react on speculative research; and a possible teleological position is to find the true spiritual value of industrialism in its ultimate furtherance of theoretical science.

At some points, however, a moral supervision of science by the community is justified. The defence sometimes made of vivisection as a direct expression of the "liberty of science," with which the State, as representing only general non-scientific opinion, has no right to interfere, must be dismissed as illegitimate. Vivisection, in so far as it offers a problem to ethics, cannot be sanctioned merely by its relation to particular scientific pursuits. Its utility for these is an element in the case, but it does not by itself decide the case. With those who regard it as not permissible merely for the solution of questions put by theoretical curiosity, I find myself in agreement. If defensible at all, it must be on the ground that the relief of human and animal suffering which results from it is greater than the suffering inflicted. Within this view further limitations have to be admitted; such as this, that pain amounting to actual torture ought not to be inflicted for the solution of any scientific question. And, of course, painful experiments on living animals should never be merely for demonstration of what has already been discovered. The use of anæsthetics, it has been urged, modifies decisions as to the kind of experiments permissible. And vivisection is clearly not the only question on which the ethics of man's treatment of animal life will call for reconsideration. These points have been put to me; but I must confess that I do not think experiments on living animals, even under anæsthetics, ought to be freely practised simply for teaching.

This is something of a digression into personal opinion; but it may serve to show the bearing of general philosophy on the exaggerated claims of experts. The question is not whether the particular opinions are right, but whether specialists, working necessarily in an abstract way within their own department, ought to rule this

with practical irresponsibility. Now, evidently no department of human activity can be wholly marked off in practice, and all considerations excluded that do not belong to one scientific mode of considering it. Morally, the fact of sentiency, with which the physiologist as such is not concerned, makes a difference as regards what is permissible in investigating the laws of organic life. The appeal is finally to an enlightened popular opinion; and in accepting this I think philosophy will be found to be in any rational sense more democratic than special science. Historically it is noteworthy that the military despots of modern times, while encouraging mathematical and physical studies and choosing them as the basis of higher education, have suppressed philosophy, and especially the moral and political sciences. And suggestions are never wanting from the scientific side that in a system of fighting industrial plutocracies, dividing the world among them, specialist research may be of extreme value to the particular social aggregate (labelled for convenience with the name of some historic people) that can promote it with the greatest efficiency.

The highest minds, philosophical as well as scientific, have not been exempt from aberrations of this kind. Not a biological specialist, but Plato himself, put forward the notion of artificial breeding, carried on in the human race through selection of partners by trained experts. In modern times this has become a recurrent fantasy; finding new encouragement in the biology of evolution. The thinker who in effect exploded it was Schopenhauer, though by a line of thought curiously inconsistent with his pessimism. Under an appearance of formal deduction from his metaphysics, but really by an effort of what has been called the scientific imagination, he showed how individualised sexual love is one manifestation of a teleology of the race, deeper than all seeming personal

aims. The immanent end being the production of the most perfect and beautiful offspring, clearly selection from outside could only modify for the worse the order that already exists. Applying this view to practice, we may conclude that, if there is any interference with marriages, it ought only to be negative; for example, to check transmission of extreme inferiorities. All positive dictation by authority, whether public or parental, is excluded on principle. The result of a more philosophical science is therefore to confirm the position that would spontaneously be taken on the ground of human liberty.[1]

All this shows how important it is not only that philosophy should become scientific, but that science should become philosophical. Accordingly, it might appear as if all scientific education ought to have its completion in philosophy. This, however, I do not maintain. While

[1] The principles of liberty and justice evolved in the Western world of course altogether forbid return to the ancient Orient in the form of new scientific mutilations imposed by authority. The Supreme Court of the United States, however, seems bent on falsifying still further the modern expectation of perpetual progress. Its recent sanction of compulsory sterilisation of the feeble-minded and of the right of the States to punish those who preach Syndicalism are on record in the *Daily News* of May 4 and May 17, 1927. The first decision is a reaction to the *leges barbarorum* of the European Dark Ages, and the second to the principles of the mediæval Inquisition. I should have liked to read what Mill and Spencer (names once honoured in America) would have said about the ultimate danger of such laws, whatever immediate utility they may seem to promise. Who can say that "feeble-minded" will not sometime be construed to mean "unfit" (as determined by the "mental tests" of psycho-physics) for efficient employment in an industrial plutocracy? Optimism, however, may be ultimately justified, and real progress may make government in accordance with plutocratical ideals more obsolete and less intelligible than the Egypt of the pyramid-builders. Carlyle at any rate, who is not usually regarded as an optimistic prophet, after speaking of the "Aristocracy of the Moneybag" as "the basest yet known," adds that there is in it "this advantage, that, like Anarchy itself, it cannot continue." "Meanwhile we will hate Anarchy as Death, which it is; and the things worse than Anarchy shall be hated *more*" (*The French Revolution*, book vii, chap. 7).

philosophy is in a sense more the affair of every one, it appeals to fewer minds as a special subject of study. The reason is, in part, that it requires normally a higher degree of generalising power; and, in part, that the direct path to it is through the subjective science of psychology, of which the fundamental method is introspection. Now, more persons are capable of observing external objects and the changes in them than of reflecting on their own mental processes. Thus philosophy, apart from its diffused influence on general thought, becomes a special occupation for a comparatively small number. What we may reasonably ask is that for those who have the special taste for it there should be no artificial hindrances to its pursuit. The way to it through science, which is probably the most natural mode of approach, should not be made more difficult than the way through classical literature.[1] In all universities there should be the possibility of taking it up at a certain stage in the more specialist pursuits—mathematical, physical (in the widest sense), and philological. To the specialists, on the other hand, it may be conceded that the way to philosophy should be always through one or other of these; so that philosophical students may begin with notions of evidence and of accurate method, which, as the greatest enthusiasts for metaphysics will admit, cannot be derived from it to start with. The *intellectus sibi permissus* should come after, not before, discipline; though, if it is not allowed to come at all, the progress of science itself (as distinguished from its commercial applications) will cease.

It is not, therefore, philosophy that can synthesise general education. And science, though an important

[1] As a "counsel of perfection" in the higher education I suggest that Greek might be placed at the summit on the literary and metaphysics on the scientific side.

element in it, and one that, at least in outline, ought to be universal, is insufficient. If seriously pursued, it soon diverges into specialism. The views given by any branch of it are "abstract," in the sense that they are detached from relation both to human life and to the whole of nature. It does not appeal to a wide range of emotions. Even the humanistic sciences, to which it may be held that the others lead up, do not directly supply what is wanting. They, too, suffer from the abstraction of the scientific point of view; and, moreover, as sciences they are inadequate. Being the latest in the series, they do not yet offer finished models of scientific method. As regards doctrine, not even in the most speculative branch of philosophy is there more dispute than in sociology, say, or political economy—the last pre-eminently an example of abstraction, and of sometimes misleading abstraction.

The predominant part of general education must in the end be literature; especially what we may call poetic—that is, creative—literature in the widest sense. This has, no doubt, since the victory of humanism over scholasticism, been made too exclusively the groundwork. Older scientific and philosophical views were dethroned without the substitution of any general illumination from those that, in the world of modern thought, displaced them. Thus for ordinary minds the study of the Greek and Roman classics has lost much of the stimulating and emancipating power it had at the opening of the modern era. When it regains this it is through the influence of new scientific and philosophical points of view; not from the philological drill that became, for the pure scholar, a sort of quasi-science, doing duty for the whole range of mental discipline, alike in the form and the matter of knowledge. And yet, with certain adaptations to meet changed conditions, it is to a grounding

in ancient and modern European literature that we must chiefly look for the educational synthesis.

Just as in the teaching of physical science, when regarded as a part of general culture, the kind of laboratory training that would fit a pupil to become an expert is out of place; so, in the teaching of the ancient classics, drill in the minutiæ of grammar and composition ought to disappear for all but the few who are to specialise in philology. It may be admitted that for those who have not, in their reading, a present consciousness of the last refinements of grammatical structure, something is lost. And, especially in the case of a dead language, this can be acquired only by assiduous attention during the plastic years of youth. To write a foreign, and especially an ancient, language is undoubtedly an elegant accomplishment and a supreme test of organic knowledge of it. All this, however, for practical reasons, must be surrendered to those who have a special taste and aptitude for the kind of accomplishment. After all, the essential thing educationally, even in the case of a living language, is not to be able to write or speak it, but to acquire appreciation of its literature. When this is steadily kept in view as the end, the educational reforms necessitated by the modern growth of knowledge together with the limitations of the human mind, will follow of themselves.

For general education the number of languages taught must evidently be restricted. Latin and French, with some more scientific and systematic teaching of English than is yet customary, may be taken to be indispensable. The academical question now seems to be whether Greek is still to be included.[1] On the whole, with the reforms suggested, no reason appears why it should not. With

[1] I have preserved this and the following paragraph as they stood in the first edition. From the next note it will be seen that I am unrepentant.

the reduction of grammar and composition, in all languages taught, to the necessary minimum, time would be greatly economised. And on every ground there are the strongest arguments against relegating Greek to the class of such specialist studies as Hebrew or Sanskrit or Arabic. Its literature belongs to the direct European tradition. A great part of modern literature has been profoundly influenced by first-hand knowledge of it. As poetic literature it is still of the highest æsthetic importance; nothing is less an affair of mere antiquarianism. On the mental discipline given by any philological study no particular stress need be laid, since this can be acquired most directly from subjects like logic and mathematics. Yet there is an advantage in combining with formal training some more concrete interest. To the other languages mentioned the same reasons are not applicable in full. If it were attempted to make out a case for Sanskrit as representing the earliest known form of an Aryan language, the reply would be the absence of direct influence, or indeed of any influence at all till recently, on European literature or thought. But Hebrew literature, it may be said, has had a direct influence comparable to that of Greek. The answer is that here the influence has been almost exclusively through translations. Knowledge of Hebrew in Europe has been mainly confined to a few experts. And, admittedly, Hebrew poetry can be appreciated in translations as no Aryan poetry can. In England the Hebrew Bible had the good fortune of being translated precisely at the time when the best minds were most in sympathy with Hebraic feeling.

Other European languages besides those mentioned may retain a kind of optional character, and should perhaps not be introduced at a very early stage. Whether a student should learn German or Italian would depend on his special line of interest. A case indeed might be

made out for placing Greek with these rather than with linguistic studies universally obligatory. The important point is, not that a minimum of it should be compulsory, but that it should remain in the group of studies belonging to general education, and not be henceforth limited to philological specialists. The time when Western Europe ceased to learn Greek is much more a warning than an encouragement to those who would discard it once again. What can be said in favour of compulsion is that to abolish it does not seem a particularly desirable reform at a time when its effect probably is to counterbalance commercial stress in other directions rather than to restrict academic liberty.[1]

On the lines set forth it seems practicable to give literature a predominating part in the higher education, while duly recognising science and philosophy. The reason for conceding to it this predominance is that from nothing else can such a view of the whole be obtained.

[1] Since the actual abolition of compulsory Greek at Oxford and Cambridge I have read with complete sympathy an article by Professor Stuart-Jones from which I quote a short passage :—

"It may be urged in defence of the institution of private property, even in the unlovely forms with which modern industrialism has clothed it, that it enables a minority to hold certain moral and spiritual values in trust for the unborn generations for whom industrialism will be a nightmare of the past; and the 'privileged position of the classics' may likewise be justified in that it enables a minority of that minority to maintain some of our highest intellectual possessions intact until the day when spiritual values are no longer in danger of being determined by the processes of commercial exchange. This was the true reason for the retention of compulsory Greek, and some will no doubt think that its abolition was premature" ("The Classics in Education," *Edinburgh Review*, October, 1921, p. 311).

I do not think it chimerical to suggest that the edition of the first book of Euclid in Greek by Sir T. L. Heath might some day be the beginning of an educational renascence. Science has a smaller vocabulary than *belles lettres*, and so a permanent work of science would combine a relatively easy introduction to the reading of the language with a training in accurate thinking.

The representation of human life in poetic literature is, in a sense, more living than life itself, as containing its imaginative completion. Instead of an aggregate of "facts," which are abstractions, it gives us the inner reality. Moreover, the philosophical, and to some extent the scientific, ideas of the ages are embodied in their enduring literature. Hence, even for competent literary instruction, precisely the kind of general scientific knowledge must be imparted of which the necessity has been shown on other grounds. It is in this way that the historical sense of relativity is acquired. The special importance of literature on the side of feeling is obvious. The æsthetic and the ethical emotions are appealed to by it as they are not by science or by philosophy as a branch of academic instruction. From no other study, in short, do we get concrete fullness.

To literature an important subsidiary study is history, in the most general sense. If this can be taught philosophically, so much the better; but agreement has not yet been arrived at on its philosophy. There can be no question, however, on the one side that the detail taught in schools should be mainly that of the history of Europe, and, on the other side, that the beginning should be made with European antiquity, and not somewhere in the Middle Ages. This, indeed, ought to be insisted on even for elementary schools. To set out from some arbitrary point in the history of England—say from the Norman Conquest—is to begin with a complex order quite unintelligible by itself. Unless the antecedents of modern Europe in Greek and Roman antiquity are presented at least in outline, neither the history of England nor of any other European country can be understood. On a small scale something should be taught about the ancient East as a background to it all; and for this a few conventional data about the history of the Jews will not

permanently suffice. But, after all, our historical concern must remain chiefly with the nations of our own group. Now, these are the nations forming what was called by Comte "the Republic of the West." And the direct antecedents of this, in his view too, are Greece and Rome. Antithetic views on the philosophy of the process thus suggest the same empirical outline of instruction. To make general European history the basis of primary education might, therefore, well be the next considerable educational reform attempted. Only on such a basis can a common and civic patriotism be founded. Before we reach this stage, however, there are many obstructions to clear away.

APPENDIX

I.—Individualism and State-Action

(*Mind*, January, 1888)

One of the most prominent facts of contemporary politics, both theoretical and practical, is the movement away from what is called "Individualism." Philosophical writers of the most various schools, tracing their idea back to Comte or Hegel or Aristotle, or developing it independently as a psychological doctrine, insist that society is prior to man; that the individual man cannot be understood except as a social product, each man having in his mind the organised results of institutions, of law, and of the experience embodied in language. Society is not to be thought of as something artificially formed by men for the purpose of doing some particular thing, but as the presupposition of all properly human activities. On the practical side no fact is more familiar than the growing approval of the action of the State in matters that till lately the best reasoned political theory excluded from its competence. Yet there are, at the same time, influential thinkers who regard this whole movement, on its practical side, as reactionary. The principle of individual liberty, they insist, must remain for ever the only sound basis of political action; and to add to the functions of the governing power is to diminish the freedom of the individual.

Those who advocate new activities of the State, when they are not content with empirical arguments to prove that good will result in particular cases, usually fall

back on one of the philosophic theories opposed to individualism. If it is urged that the action of the State interferes with individual liberty, they reply that "the older individualism" is superseded; that it is once more a part of sound political theory that "the State may do anything." The individualistic ideals of the immediate past are the outcome of philosophical individualism. The outcome of the newer doctrine is a more authoritative ideal.

In all arguments of this form there is an evident assumption. The word "individualism," as has just been indicated, is used in two distinct senses. It may mean the philosophical or psychological individualism that attempts to explain society and the State from the relations of individual men at first isolated (yet assumed to possess already all human attributes), who afterwards find their advantage in the social union and in political organisation; or it may mean the individualism that places its practical ideal in a life not authoritatively regulated from without, but developing itself spontaneously from within. These two "individualistic" doctrines have often been held by the same person. John Stuart Mill, for example, was an individualist in both senses. The views opposed to the two kinds of individualism have been similarly conjoined; Auguste Comte was an opponent of individualism in both senses. It does not follow from this, however, that either individualistic doctrine is a deduction from the other. The two meanings of the word, once distinguished, are at first sight sufficiently remote, and something more than the common name is required to prove their necessary connexion.

The doctrine opposed to philosophical individualism may no doubt be expected to have important practical consequences. Legislation may not improbably be suggested by it which had formerly no theoretical basis. So far the

advocates of new kinds of State-action are in the right when they appeal to the modern theory. Where they are wrong is in dismissing as henceforth baseless all objections to State-action that are founded on appeals to individual liberty. Objections of this kind, it is now clear, will have to be met on their merits. Only two ways of meeting them are open. Either the individualistic ideal must be shown to be really bound up with philosophical individualism, and so to disappear when this disappears; or the new kinds of legislation suggested by the modern doctrine must be proved not to be incompatible with the ideal of freedom. Before anything can be decided it is therefore necessary to determine the exact relations of each philosophical doctrine to this ideal.

First of all, then, it is clear that in either type of doctrine individual freedom is finally secure. For the individual alone has consciousness of himself. There is no "social consciousness" outside the individual mind. From this it follows that there can be no such thing as "collective happiness." The ultimate end of social life is attainable only by the individual. To the good of the individual, accordingly, social good must finally be subordinated. Now the good of each can be attained only when all are free to seek happiness in their own way. Individual freedom, therefore, must be the ultimate end of the organisation of the State. And if it remains true that the good of society is to be preferred when it comes into conflict with individual happiness, this is because the existence and welfare of society are the condition of there being individuals at all who are able to live in freedom. In ethics this is the justification for ascribing merit to acts of self-sacrifice. In politics it is the ground of the maxim, "*Salus reipublicae suprema lex.*"

These are, in substance, the reasons given by Spinoza

and also by Mr. Herbert Spencer—both in a sense philosophical individualists—for the place assigned to freedom in their ideal State. The reasoning, however, does not depend on the theoretical individualism of their philosophical point of view. And if, now, we leave this final reply out of account for a moment, we shall find that the doctrine of Spinoza and of Spencer, in so far as it is philosophically individualistic, is capable of being turned against the ideal of individual freedom.

To put the argument first in a general form: the philosophical doctrine of individualism supposes that men on entering into the social union sacrifice part of the "rights," or powers of acting freely, which they had in the state of nature, in return for protection and other advantages. Civilisation, then, it would seem, must be a movement away from liberty. It will naturally consist in a gradual restriction of the freedom at first reserved, which becomes less as societies become more definitely organised. Turning to the particular doctrines in question, we find that according to Spinoza the form of political society in which there is most liberty is nearest to the "state of nature."[1] But the state of nature is a state in which there is no justice or injustice, but "all things come alike to all," because nature is yet unmodified by human law.[2] The state of liberty, then, it would seem, must be the lowest state. Spencer's conception of the social organism as built up out of individuals analogous to cells, at first only aggregated, afterwards becoming definitely grouped and coherent, and forming an hierarchy of parts, gives ground for a similar inference. For if, as Spencer affirms, the governing body represents the central nervous system, and if there is progress in the social

[1] *Tractatus Theologico-Politicus*, c. xx, § 38.
[2] *Ibid.*, c. xix, §§ 8, 20.

organism, then its general movement ought, according to the analogy, to be in the direction of greater subordination of parts; this being the general direction of movement in the zoological series.

Of course these objections are not unanswerable, even from the point of view of philosophical individualism. From the point of view of the modern doctrine of the priority of society, however, they do not merely vanish; they turn entirely to the advantage of the "individualistic" ideal. For the individual is now conceived, not as matter to be organised, but as gradually emerging, from a primitive state in which he was only identifiable as a member of a class performing assigned functions, into definite recognition as a being with ascertained personal rights. The movement that presents itself as the characteristic movement of civilisation is not the restriction of a reserve of liberty, but the gradual growth of liberty. And by the new way of regarding society the good of the individual is more clearly seen to be something added to the good of the State, of which the good of the State is only the condition. When Spencer describes society as "super-organic," that is a typical expression of philosophical individualism. According to the doctrine of the priority of society, the individual man, in so far as the common life of society assumes in him distinct personal form, must rather be regarded as "super-social."

Carried to its logical conclusion, therefore, the modern doctrine opposed to philosophical individualism, instead of destroying the individualistic ideal, restores it in a more unqualified form. "Individuality" is no longer, as Mill described it, merely "one of the elements of well-being," but is that for the sake of which social well-being is in the end to be desired.

That this is the outcome of the modern theory of the relations of society and man becomes evident in Green's

"Lectures on the Principles of Political Obligation."[1] According to Green, the ultimate end of political organisation is "moral freedom"—that is, the freedom of the individual to become what he is capable of becoming as a moral being. To provide the conditions of moral "self-realisation" is therefore the function of the State. Now, Green proceeds consistently from the basis of the anti-individualistic philosophical theory. What has been contended for is therefore strongly confirmed when he is found maintaining that freedom in some form is the final political end.

Green's definition of this end is doubtless open to the criticism that it excludes much that has hitherto been understood by freedom. Intellectual freedom, for example, was not the least important part of that which was contended for by such representatives of the older doctrine as Mill and Spinoza. How is intellectual freedom to be brought under Green's definition? The disciples of Green would probably make some such answer as this. Certain persons feel it to be "a duty," or a part of their "moral self-realisation," to attain clearness of thought on matters of general human interest. The "right" which is the correlative of this duty must therefore be secured to them by the ideal State. Considerations of this kind, it may be granted, have some weight in enforcing a conclusion already arrived at. But would they be sufficient to establish this conclusion if it were questioned? It is plain that they would not. The governing powers would see in them little more than an appeal from the law of the State to personal "conscientious convictions"; and this is not held to be a sound political argument. If the liberty of thought and speech is to be permanently secure, free intellectual activity—apart from considerations as to

[1] *Works of T. H. Green*, ed. R. L. Nettleship, vol. ii.

its usefulness to the State, which will always count for something—must be seen to be a good in itself, not a mere condition of moral self-culture.

Although on this particular point Green would not have differed practically from Mill, it would be a mistake to suppose that it makes no real difference whether we speak of "freedom" simply or of "moral freedom." There are indications in Green's political work of his approval of restrictions on personal liberty that Mill unhesitatingly condemned; and these can be traced to the limitation of his formula. The limitation, however, is due to the exclusiveness of Green's ethical attitude, not to the theory of society from which he sets out. In order to get rid of it, we have only to interpret "self-realisation" in a wider sense. The self-realisation of the individual being regarded, in accordance with Green's view, as the end for which the State exists, the political conception of freedom will necessarily be enlarged with the enlargement of the conception of individual self-realisation.[1]

But if the individualistic ideal is thus re-established, does it follow that we ought to condemn all those activities of the State that are condemned by Spencer, and would have been condemned by the greatest English political thinkers of the early part of the nineteenth century? What is to be said, for example, of interferences of the State with industrial competition? Does interference with the working of the industrial system constitute of itself an interference with individual liberty? In short, is the commercial and industrial policy of "*laissez-faire*" a corollary of the ethical and political

[1] Green himself (in the *Prolegomena to Ethics*, p. 312) recognises the difficulty that there is in the way of admitting his ethical formula as a complete expression of all that is implied in human self-realisation.

doctrine of Milton's *Areopagitica* and Mill's *Liberty*? An explicit discussion of this question will make clear what has been gained for political philosophy by the advance of philosophic theory beyond individualism. The conclusion that is come to on this special question is, besides, itself one of the chief applications of any philosophical system of political principles.

Now, we know that the word "freedom," as it is often applied, has in reality nothing to do with freedom in the sense with which we are here concerned. "Free-trade," for example, as was pointed out by Mill, is not a part of the doctrine of individual freedom. The ground of the doctrine of free-trade is not that to prevent a man receiving foreign commodities free of special imposts deprives him of that personal freedom for the sake of which the State exists, but that unrestricted international exchange of commodities is commercially the most profitable mode of exchange. To take an entirely different example, the doctrine of "a free Church in a free State" may be a very good formula for modern times, but what has been called "the liberty of the Church" is not a part of personal liberty. When the Church is struggling with the State, what is really taking place is a struggle for dominance between rival powers. And the action of a powerful corporation aiming at dominance ought not to be confounded —although it often is—with the struggle of men for individual freedom. Again, the check that has long since been put on "the right of private war" was no doubt, to those who were primarily affected by it, an interference with their liberty; but this kind of interference with the liberty of some, it is universally admitted, is required in the interests of the liberty of all.

This last example suggests that the case is not otherwise with freedom of commercial and industrial competition. And Mill, if we may judge by his deductions from

the proposition that "trade is a social act,"[1] was of opinion that no interference with trade as such constitutes in principle a violation of individual freedom. Freedom of commercial competition, so far as it can be maintained, is rather to be based, in Mill's view, on grounds similar to the grounds for maintaining "free-trade" in the special sense—namely, that the science of political economy shows this to be on the whole the best general condition for commercial activity. When the case is once definitely put, it seems clear that "commercial freedom," although it is often thought to be a deduction from the fundamental principle of individual liberty, is really a deduction from the principles of political economy. But political economy is an abstract science—a science that treats of certain classes of social phenomena in isolation. Any change in the theory of society as a whole necessitates, therefore, a corresponding change in the mode of application of economic principles.

In order to determine more exactly the theoretical position of the State with regard to commercial and industrial activity, we may best proceed from the Spencerian conception of "the social organism." For this conception, notwithstanding Spencer's own "individualism," must furnish the ground for any attempt to go beyond individualism in practice. The social organism, according to Spencer, like the biological organism, may be divided into certain systems of organs. There are the organs whose function is "sustentative" and the organs whose function is "protective." The former constitute the industrial organisation, the latter the military organisation; the governing body of the State representing the central nervous system. Now, the system of organs that is for defence and attack in the animal organism is under much

[1] *On Liberty*, c. v.

stronger and more continuous central control than the system that is for sustentation. Hence it is inferred that the same relation should exist in the social organism. Direct social consideration, it is further contended, establishes a concomitance of the growth of industrial and of general freedom. Societies normally go through a stage of "militarism," followed by one of "industrialism." In a society of the industrial type, the sustentative system, interfered with at all points during the militant period, has emancipated itself from central control, and now forms a system working independently. The industrial type of society is in all social and political relations freer than the militant type.

It may be admitted that the association of a certain measure of growth in general freedom with a certain growth of industrialism is a plausible historical generalisation. At the same time, it is clear that the withdrawal of State-control from a group of subordinate organisations is not quite the same thing as the emancipation of the individual. And, indeed, where the industrial organisation is most free from central control, it becomes itself a power to control the individual just as effectively as the State has ever done.

The military and industrial systems are, in truth, both alike comparable to those systems of "reflex mechanisms" conceived by modern physiology. All such mechanisms are subordinate to the total life of the organism; and although central control is of a different kind in the case of the "sustentative" functions, it is just as much present as in the case of the "protective" functions. The life of individuals in the State is held to be comparable to the life of the cells. Now, a physiologist, considering the interest of the cells, would probably find that they are free to get the greatest advantage in the common life of the organism when the particular mechanism of which

they form part is well controlled by the central nervous system and balanced with others so as to suffer neither from excess nor defect of function.

The essential thing, however, is to note that the industrial system is a mechanism subservient to the general life of the State, not a group of individuals striving to develop themselves freely and only hindered by State-interference. This is recognised by Spencer himself in the following passage of the *Principles of Sociology*:—

> Were this the fit place, some pages might be added respecting a possible future social type, differing as much from the industrial as this does from the militant—a type which, having a sustaining system more fully developed than any we know at present, will use the products of industry neither for maintaining a militant organisation nor exclusively for material aggrandisement; but will devote these to the carrying on of higher activities. As the contrast between the militant and industrial types is indicated by inversion of the belief that individuals exist for the benefit of the State into the belief that the State exists for the benefit of individuals; so the contrast between the industrial type and the type likely to be evolved from it, is indicated by inversion of the belief that life is for work into the belief that work is for life. But we are here concerned with inductions derived from societies that have been and are, and cannot enter upon speculations respecting societies that may be.[1]

[1] *Principles of Sociology*, vol. i, 3rd ed., p. 563. To this passage there is an interesting parallel in a "Utopia" suggested by Comte from which industrialism is eliminated. The content of life, he says, would become, at the ideal limit, simply intellectual or æsthetic activity, with love of humanity for regulating principle. See *Politique Positive*, t. i, p. 358: "Sans les nécessités matérielles qui dominent notre existence, cette double puissance [of love and intellect] suffirait à la régler entièrement. Dispensés alors d'une pénible activité, nous poursuivrions directement le souverain bien, l'amour universel, qui n'aurait plus à commander que l'essor

The question here suggests itself: Cannot movement towards this future type be better promoted by conscious action through the State than by leaving the industrial type to work itself out? Spencer, indeed, expects the transformation to take place entirely by individual effort and voluntary association. The interference of the State, he would say, can only retard it. This admission, however, seems necessary: that if the State were to attempt to promote the transformation described, it would be acting, whether rightly or wrongly, in the interests of individual freedom, not for its suppression. It would be attempting, in fact, to economise the expenditure of activities which, unless they are regulated by conscious human agency through the State, must inevitably be externally determined either by the operation of natural forces or by the industrial mechanism, analogous in its action to an undirected natural force.

Further, it may be contended that, if Spencer in this passage is not to be interpreted as meaning that in the future the "higher activities" will be promoted with more direct intention by the State, there is no ground for establishing a difference of possible from actual types of societies at all. For there have always been a few

intellectuel propre à mieux développer son ascendant, par un sage exercice de la raison, et surtout de l'imagination. Malgré sa nature imaginaire, cette hypothèse peut devenir très-efficace, pour nous fournir une limite idéale, d'où nous tenterons de rapprocher de plus en plus la vie réelle."

Thus both the theorists of perfected Industrialism had a glimpse beyond it; and Spencer's glimpse, though later, was evidently quite independent of Comte's.

In seeing beyond both military and industrial efficiency as ends, Aristotle had preceded both. War, he said, is for the sake of peace, business for the sake of leisure (by which he does not mean inactivity or mere play), and the necessary and useful in practical things for the sake of the noble and beautiful. And he shows how the Spartans, who sacrificed everything else to military efficiency, in the end failed in that also.

thinkers who have recognised "higher activities" than commerce and war as the true end of social life; and it would be an injustice to the societies, "militant" as well as "industrial," of the present and the past, to say that nothing has yet been done by them to make such activities possible. Among the republics of antiquity, for example, the entire sacrifice of the true end of the State to mere military efficiency, as by the Spartan legislation, was not universal. And, to come to modern times, is it not conceivable that the exaggerated development of an industrial as well as of a military system may tend to suppress the higher activities, and so may have its dangers for the real freedom of the individual? If these dangers exist, then, to judge from the physiological analogy, defective central control must exaggerate them in the "industrial" just as excessive central control exaggerates them in the "militant" type.

Whatever application may be made of it, the conclusion is clear. State-interference with industry, whether judicious or injudicious, is in no way inconsistent with the principle of individual liberty. Always in subordination to the supreme end, the State may put checks on commercial competition, or regulate the whole industrial system as it pleases, with a view to any social good that may be regarded as an intermediate end—say, the vitality of the race or the diffusion of leisure. The condition of its effective action is adequate knowledge of industrial causes and effects as attained or attainable by scientific economics. Thus the determination of the means of bringing about a given result becomes a question of applied economic science. To ascertain whether the result itself is desirable is a question of general politics.

The mode of consideration adopted by Mill in fixing the limits of State-action, as has been already suggested, is, in spite of his theoretical individualism, not incon-

sistent with this conclusion. He finds, for example, that in certain special cases freedom to buy and sell commodities is a condition of personal liberty, and that it is to be maintained for that reason, and not because the mechanism of exchange of commodities ought in general to be unrestricted.[1] Again, he discusses a particular case of regulation of hours of labour, and finds, on principles generally applicable, that State-regulation is justified.[2] But ought we not to go further than this? Would not the conclusion arrived at justify the State in taking over the whole industrial system and working it by its collective authority? A proper apportionment by the State of those works that are necessary for the maintenance of the life of the community might, as some socialistic thinkers have contended, secure the greatest amount of liberty on the whole; and thus the only possible objection is obviated.

The conclusion, however, that the State may justifiably interfere with the industrial system does not imply that it ought always to interfere. There is, first, the condition that it should have adequate knowledge. The admissibility of State-socialism, then, is reduced (if we assume it to be otherwise consistent with freedom) to a question of applied economics. Now, one possibility is that economic science may prove the interference of the State to be in all cases injurious. This is the view of Spencer and of many "orthodox" economists. A second possibility is that in the hands of its later students it may demonstrate the socialistic position. But there is also this third possibility: that, while the older economists have shown the interference of the State to be in many cases injurious, there are still cases in which State-action may be proved from the basis of

[1] *On Liberty*, c. v. [2] *Ibid*, c. iv.

economic science to be effective for other purposes than "negative regulation."

Political economy, so far as it has been scientifically treated, probably gives sufficient grounds for concluding against the extreme socialistic position that the community ought to assume direct command of the whole industrial system. The scientific character of the older economics is confirmed by the influence of its generalisations on other sciences. The stimulus its doctrine of the division of labour gave to physiology and the influence of Malthus on Darwin are well known. Spencer's biological analogy, again, confirms both the procedure and the results of "abstract" political economy: its procedure, because the industrial organisation of society is found to be analogous to a subordinate system of reflex mechanisms capable of being studied, up to a certain point, separately from the rest of the organism; its results, because the industrial organisation is found to be analogous to that system of reflex mechanisms which normally works with least central control. These results, if accepted, limit very much the prospects of effective State-action. At the same time, both Spencer's analogy and economic science still leave open the possibility that actions from the centre, not minutely regulative as in the case of a military system, but regulative in a general way, may subserve the higher interests of the State. What prevents such possibilities from being considered is on one side the temporary eclipse of scientific economics, and on the other a traditional opinion that all positive applications of economic science by the State are inconsistent with individual freedom. The eclipse of economics will probably last no longer than the unjustified identification of the pure science, by some of its exponents, with a discredited industrial policy. It is against this policy, and not against the science itself, that a prejudice still exists.

The objection made to increased State-action by those who are unwilling to sacrifice individual freedom, and the neglect to answer it on the part of those who advocate new activities of the State, are alike due to identification of the two senses of the word "individualism." On each side, therefore, we may find ground of hope. For within the limits of science there are always chances of discovery both of new laws and new applications of old ones; and, as has been seen, the organisation of industry in the higher interests of the State is in no way essentially opposed to individual freedom, but is rather a necessary condition of freedom.

II.—Politics and Industry

(*Macmillan's Magazine*, January, 1892)

In Europe there is at present no "military problem." There are, undoubtedly, discussions on the chances of war and on the degree of efficiency to which particular armies have attained, but there is no military problem in the sense in which there is an "industrial problem." In other words, there is no difference of opinion as to the relation of the army to the State. It is admitted on all sides that military efficiency is not to be left to chance, but is a thing that governments must attend to; and it is admitted that the State does not exist in order to keep up an army, but the army in order to preserve the State. Nor is it any longer necessary to devise means by which military efficiency may be rendered compatible with any type of political institutions. These are determined by the general political movement; while the type of military organisation is determined independently by military exigencies.

This was not always so. There have been times when it was necessary to prove by elaborate argument that if it has too little strength for war a nation cannot be sure of maintaining its existence. On the other side, too great military efficiency has presented itself as a danger to free institutions, and schemes have been worked out by political thinkers for combining freedom with the national strength which they saw to be necessary. Thus the question was not simply how to bring to bear the knowledge of experts on a public opinion that was in agreement about the end but ignorant of the means. Theories as to the form military organisation should take were involved with disputed questions about the political structure of society. General ideas, arrived at by reasoning on facts accessible to every one, had still a share in modifying the course of events. Partly by the influence of such general ideas, and partly by the conflict of forces, a solution capable of lasting for a time has been at length attained. Anything in advance of the present solution—any kind of international organisation, for example—now seems more out of the range of speculation than it did in the eighteenth century.[1]

The cessation of the military problem as a question of general politics has been accompanied by the rise of the industrial problem. There have been times, of course, when there was no "industrial problem." A certain industrial system was accepted by every one, and all change that was introduced in it came about through unconscious processes; or, more exactly, through processes not determined by any conscious effort on the part of society to shape the industrial system as it ought

[1] It has come in again since the Great War; and that, in spite of all the evils that the war has brought, may turn out to be a good comparable to the destruction of the surviving European autocracies.

to be. So far as there was any conscious collective effort, it was simply an effort to promote prosperity within the lines of the existing system. It need scarcely be said that the present is not a time when this is all that is aimed at. The whole attitude of society or of the State towards industry has become a question for conscious deliberation. The question is not simply to find the means of attaining an end that is agreed upon. There is no agreement even as to the general form of the solution. This being so, the question is not one simply for experts. At its present stage light may be thrown upon it by reasoning that proceeds on entirely general grounds; that is, without any reference to specific proposals.

The best means of throwing light upon the question in its general aspect seems to be a classification of the chief possible solutions. There is at least a chance that the right solution may be arrived at by elimination of the wrong ones.

First, the solution known as *laissez-faire* may be considered. The advocates of this solution may be most correctly described as industrial anarchists. In spite of disclaimers, this is the doctrine that furnishes the intellectual basis for nearly all attacks on "socialistic legislation." It is, perhaps, the first conscious attempt that has been made to solve the industrial problem. It owes its plausibility partly to the fact that it really embodies some truth, and partly to a confusion. The confusion consists in an identification of economical *laissez-faire* with political freedom. The truth it contains is the clear conception of some results of the science known as political economy. When economists had shown that in particular kinds of commercial transaction, such as international trade, the country that does not interfere with the economic course of things will be the most prosperous

commercially, it was an obvious practical inference that, whenever commercial prosperity is the thing desired, the State ought to let transactions of this particular kind alone. The *laissez-faire* school drew the correct inference, but it proceeded to generalise it into a precept applicable at all times and places and to every kind of commercial and industrial transaction. No doubt exceptions were admitted, but they were admitted only as exceptions to a general rule. The line usually taken now is to go on admitting more and more exceptions while yet continuing to maintain that the rule is true in its generality. Still this process, continued long enough, amounts to the rejection of *laissez-faire* as a universal precept. By gradual concessions on the part of its practical defenders, it is being reduced to the position it was entitled to claim at first—that of a rule true in some particular cases. In practice its application has been mitigated, both by survivals from an older state of things and by new modern legislation proceeding from motives not purely economical.

The type of society that consistent industrial anarchy tends to produce is the plutocratic, and its advocates are now mostly found among the friends of plutocracy. When no function of the State in relation to industry is recognised except that of clearing the ground for unlimited competition, the natural consequence is that everything is made subordinate to this kind of industrial struggle, and that those who are most proficient in it attain, together with wealth, the largest share of political power. With conscious or unconscious art the industrial anarchists proclaim their cause to be that of individual freedom. Yet it is a fact that freedom in its political sense was understood and fought for long before the maxim of letting industry alone—whether right or wrong commercially—was heard of. And, when we look at the

actual state of the case, the contradiction between individual freedom and regulation of industry by law is seen to be quite illusory. The operations of the greater industry—and this is what it is commonly proposed to regulate—are part of an immense and complicated mechanism where there is no room for really free contract in matters of detail between individual employers and workmen. The action of the mechanism left to itself is determined by the comparatively blind forces recognised in economics—love of gain and need of subsistence. State-intervention brings to bear upon it forces involving both more intelligence and more regard to ethical ends. By this means it sets the individual free, in a larger number of cases, to become more of an end for himself and less of an instrument for external ends. It thus increases the kind of freedom for which, according to one theory, the State exists.

Having dealt with the anarchical solution, we may proceed to deal with its antithesis, the socialistic solution. This is to be distinguished here from what is called "socialistic legislation," or "State-socialism"; these being merely names applied to any mitigation of anarchy. Socialism, in its proper sense, must be taken to mean the actual conduct, by the central government or its subordinate governments and agents, of all industrial operations. It involves, of course, the substitution of collective for individual property. The purely economic argument against socialism is that it would be less efficient in producing wealth. Work done under the direct compulsion of social authority would be badly done, and absence of the hope that exists where there is room for competition would further depress all energies. When socialism is considered on more general grounds, the argument is urged that private property is essential to individual freedom. Neither of these arguments can

really be answered. And the contention that genuine socialism is incompatible with individual freedom is completely confirmed by recent popular literature on the socialistic side. To these arguments it may be added that socialism has, in common with the opposite system, the defect of regarding society too exclusively from the economical point of view. For the industrial anarchist, the State is there chiefly to make sure that the action of economic forces is not interfered with. If these by themselves tend to produce a certain type of society, all that remains for the individual is to adapt himself to it. Bringing other social forces into play is not to be thought of. The tendency of commercial competition is to become fiercer. Let us then consider the type that is most successful under fierce competition and try to become like that. Anything that will "pay" is as "liberal" as anything else if intelligently studied. Then let us study intelligently what will pay. On his side, the socialist would exact from everybody labour which could be proved before some social authority to be useful. And such compulsion would be made practicable, and would be made to press on all alike (except perhaps the officials) by the absence of individual property and free contract. Thus, especially, all serious æsthetic pursuits would be rendered impossible (except perhaps when the favour of authority could be gained). For the socialist, the State exists first as an industrial mechanism, and all that is not industrial is a superfluous accompaniment of its working. In short, consistent socialism, when examined, turns out to be as soulless as plutocracy.

A solution different from either of those that have been discussed is accepted by Positivists and Catholics. This may be called the hierocratic solution. Private property is allowed, but its use is to be ordered in accordance with a uniform religious doctrine theoretically

elaborated and applied to practice by a priesthood. Capital, according to the Positivists, is to be "moralised." That is to say, capitalists are to regulate the distribution of wealth in the interests of workmen. This could not be secured without some social power separate from the body of capitalists; and the power is found in a Church. A moral public opinion practically irresistible by individuals is to be formed and wielded by an organised "spiritual power" independent of the State. The solution recently propounded by Leo XIII for the acceptance of Catholics does not differ from this essentially, though the theological doctrine of the Church in the two cases is of course not the same. One merit may be acknowledged in this solution. A wider view of society is taken than in the two others. All social activities are recognised, and not simply economic activity. On the other hand, they are recognised only to be controlled by the doctrine and discipline of a universal Church. No amount of material comfort diffused to any conceivable extent is worth this price. To permit either an old or a new Church to take the place claimed for it would involve the suppression of intellectual liberty. Now, intellectual liberty, whatever may be the aspirations of the "authoritarian" schools, is not a mere incident of a "period of transition," but a permanent conquest of philosophic thought and of the development of the modern State.

The solution which remains to be considered, and which the course of the argument has gradually brought into view, is the doctrine of State-control or State-regulation of industry according to the best ideas and knowledge attainable at the time. This, in distinction from the others, may be called the political solution. It is untouched by any of the arguments that have been fatal to the rest. In essence it is the doctrine that has been instinctively acted upon both in ancient and modern

States. When a mistaken policy was pursued in the past, this was not because the State failed to recognise the limits of its own general sphere of action, but because it was ignorant of some particular law of economics. The remedy is not to exclude as many industrial questions as possible from the sphere of State-action, but to gain the most accurate knowledge of the conditions of particular problems and then to apply it both negatively and positively; and not simply for the maintenance of prosperity, but for the transformation of the industrial system itself. This does not imply State-ownership of all capital, which is the socialistic solution; but it implies that no limit shall be recognised to the action of the State upon industry except the knowledge that action would be injurious to the commonwealth. Where there is doubt there may be action or abstinence from action according to the probabilities of the case. At a time like the present, when the industrial system is comparatively plastic, the bias ought to be in favour of action.

INDEX

ABÉLARD, 110
Æschylus, xiv, xxviii ff.; 13, 30, 68 n.
Alexander the Great, 49
American Declaration of Independence, 24
Aristophanes, 40, 49
Aristotle, xvii, xviii, xx, 16, 20, 24, 27, 32 n., 39, 78, 110, 116, 117, 133, 144 n.
Augustus, 50, 53, 54
Aurelius, Marcus, 53–5

BACON, on possible dangers of applied science, vii; on "strangeness" as an element in beauty, 46; his ideal of efficient monarchy, 60
Balzac, 68 n.
Bentham, his calculus of pleasure and pain, 15–16
Berkeley, Bp., 116
Bernard, St., 110
Brutus, 33, 34 n.
Burnet, J., 32 n.
Butler, Bp., on modern slavery, 38

CÆSAR, 33, 48, 52, 53, 72
Campanella, xxii
Campbell, L., 32 n.
Carlyle, 103, 124 n.
Cassius, 33, 34 n.
Cato, 34 n., 53
Celsus, xx n., 55
Charles II, 111
Child-labour, 86 n.
Cicero, xv, 19
Coleridge, 116
Comte, A., xviii ff.; chaps. i, ii *passim*; 29, 35, 37, 48, 49, 51, 69, 87, 88, 94, 98 n., 100, 117, 121, 131, 133, 134, 143 n.
Confucius, 22
Constantine, 42, 117
Cromwell, 111
Culture, as end, 26, 27

DANTE, 34 n., 53 n.
Darwin, 147
Demosthenes, xv
Diogenes Laertius, moral sayings in *Lives of the Philosophers*, 22
Dionysius II of Syracuse, 32 n.

EUGENICS, indirect, 102; limits of direct, 124
Euripides, 49

FABIAN Socialists, The, 90
Ferguson, W. Scott, xxvii n.
Fortune, inequality of, 80
French Declarations of Rights, 78
"Fundamentalism," 73

GALTON, Sir F., law of return of race to the mean, 91
Gaul, Cæsar's conquest of, 48
Greek, compulsory, 127–9
Green, T. H., 138–9
Gregory VII (Hildebrand), 115
Gregory XIII, his reform of the Julian Calendar, 72
Grote, G., xxiv

HAPPINESS, as end in ethics, 15–16
Heath, Sir T. L., 129 n.
Hegel, 1, 48, 133
Heraclitus, xxx, 30
History, place of, in education, 130–1
Hobbes, 20, 21, 60, 111, 113
"Hobbism," as regards ecclesiastical power, anticipated in the Middle Ages, 110

Homer, 4, 31
Hugo, Victor, xxi
Hume, on Archimedean lever of priesthoods, 9

IMMORTALITY, "objective" and "subjective," 8
India, British dominion in, 51–2, 63
Individual, the metaphysical, 79
Innocent III, 58
Isocrates, 22, 49

JULIAN, 53, 54
Justice and Freedom, maxim of the Liberal State, 12

KANT, 23, 24, 27, 38; opposition of his ethical ideal to industrial Socialism, 77; on the "good will," 117

LANDOR, W. S., xv
Leo XIII, his Encyclical on Labour, 154
Literature, due predominance of, in education, 126 ff.
Locke on Toleration, 113
Lords, House of, 68–9
Louis XIV, 68
Love or Altruism, 17–18
Luther, 111

MACAULAY, 103
Magna Charta, 58
Maistre, J. de, 4, 13, 55
Malthus, 147
Marriage, 95–6
Merit, personal, 79 ff.
Meyer, Ed., 37, 57
Michelet, J., 67
Mill, J. S., xvii, xxiv, xxvi, 69, 70, 96, 106 n., 116, 124 n.; Appendix I *passim*
Milton, xxiv, 96, 140
Mommsen, Th., 52, 53
More, Sir Thomas, xxii n.

NANTES, Revocation of Edict of, 114
Napoleon, 33
Nations, League of, 63
Newman, W. L., 90 n.
Nicholas I (of Russia), letter of Comte to, 9
Norman Conquest, 48, 57, 130

OLYMPIODORUS (biographer of Plato), xx
Order and Progress, maxim of Positivism, 12
Origen, xxi n., 55

PATER, W. H., 61 n.
Pericles, 52
Personality as basis of liberty, 19–20
Philip the Fair, 110
—— of Macedon, 49
Plato, xv ff.; 16, 24, 32, 33, 40, 41, 70, 78, 93, 95, 96, 98, 100, 123
Platonic Epistles, The, xx, xxi, 32, 33
Plotinus, 116, 117
Plutarch, 32 n.
Political Economy, 82, 147
Pragmatism, 29, 30, 39, 117
Progress, perhaps "asymptotic," 10
Prohibition of alcohol, xxiv, 73
Proportional Representation, 70–71

REFERENDUM, The, 71–2
Renouvier, Ch., xxi, xxv, 23
Romantic Movements, 45–6
Ruskin, 104

SCHOPENHAUER, 90, 123
Shakespeare, xiv, xxii
Shelley, xiii, xxviii; (quoted) 64; 90, 96
Slavery, ancient and modern, 36–40
Socrates, xxi, 49
Spencer, H., 1, 35, 37, 38, 82; on "Professional Institutions," 97–101; 102, 124 n.; Appendix I *passim*

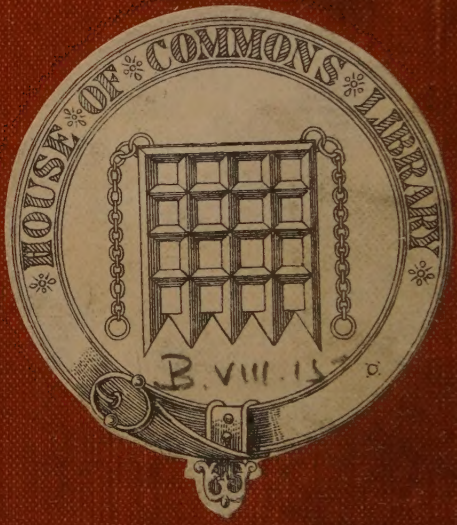
Spinoza, 19, 27, 35, 111, 113, 116, 117, 135, 136, 138
Stuart-Jones, H., on classical studies, 129 n.
Swinburne, 46

TAYLOR, A. E., 32 n.
Thucydides, xiv, 48, 49
Tolstoy, xxii
Tyrant, the Greek, 31–3, 53

UTILITARIANISM, meaning of, 15 ff.

VETO, Local, 73
Virgil, 53
Vivisection, as ethical question, 122

WEISMANN, A., 91
Women, in Comte's system, 7; position of, according to Plato and Mill, 70
Wordsworth, 33 n.
World-State, ideal of, rejected, 62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